REGINA JULY 1989

Symposium

ABOUT

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VOL. 1 SPEAKERS' PAPERS

HONORARY CHAIRPERSON:
Her Excellency the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauvé, P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada
SPONSORED BY:
The Canadian Provinces
HOSTED BY:
The Government of Saskatchewan
A Symposium About Families is presented by direction of the Annual Premiers' Conference of 1988.

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A Symposium
About Families

DOCUMENTS

Speakers' Papers

FOREWORD

A Symposium About Families was held in Regina, Saskatchewan, July 11 - 14, 1989. It was initiated by the ten Premiers of Canada at their annual conference during August of 1988. The Symposium was cost-shared by the provinces and hosted by Saskatchewan.

Thirty-four plenary speakers and panelists were invited to present information at the Symposium. Topics included Education and Families, Law and Families, Work and Family Life, The Health of our Families, Serving Vulnerable Families, The Family in the Community, Parenting Today, Family Income, Communication With and Within Families, and Canada's Families Today.

Over 750 delegates from across Canada attended the conference and participated in the plenary and panel sessions, the question and answer periods, and the delegates' workshops.

Over 50 percent represented almost 300 non-governmental organizations, including: churches, religious associations and colleges; Indian/native service agencies, bands and associations; family crisis, adoption, childrens aid, youth, teen mother, womens, sexual assault and child care agencies; home economist agencies; home and school associations; schools, school boards and associations, community colleges, technical institutes and educational associations; health associations, home care services, hospitals and nurses associations; alcohol and drug treatment agencies; community-living associations/agencies; seniors associations; police forces; municipal governments; housing agencies; human services professional associations; policy institutes; employment agencies; welfare advocacy; businesses; social development associations; private law firms; multicultural agencies; televisions producers; libraries; performing arts and other individuals and families.

Governmental representation was composed of delegates from agencies dealing with: family, community and social services; employment, labour and human resources; municipal affairs; education and adult education; health; housing; womens' directorates; recreation; agriculture; finance and revenue; alcohol and drug abuse; public service commissions; consumer affairs; transportation; liquor commissions; human rights commissions; multicultural; inter-governmental affairs; rural affairs; executive councils; secretary of state; pension agencies, ombudsman; justice; crown corporations; economic development and business; community event agencies; Indian and native affairs.

Honourary Chairperson of **A Symposium About Families** was Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauve, P.C. C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada.

Chairman of the symposium was Mr. Knowlton Nash who was for a decade CBC's Chief Correspondent and Anchor for The National, from November 1978.

PURPOSE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The purpose of **A Symposium About Families** was to allow governments and others to be exposed to a broad spectrum of views about supporting and strengthening families. It was a forum for diverse perspectives to be shared - for governments and delegates to learn from the experiences of Canadians from other professions, other communities, other regions and other cultures. The symposium was a gathering where people could meet others of similar backgrounds or professions, with whom they might exchange ideas and solutions. The symposium served as an opportunity for delegates to put forward ideas on what issues families face, and what can be done about these.

Changing economics, shifting cultural realities and social forces affect families today in many ways. High technology, affluence, emotional estrangement and social dislocation have all created broadly divergent perspectives on families today.

Increased mobility, declining birthrates, the reduction in support of the extended family and the increase in single parent or blended families have changed our perception of the traditional family unit. Alternate family arrangements have increased and become commonplace. Families are experiencing more separation, divorce and remarriage. There are single parents, childless couples and single households. Families are becoming smaller. Career and economic factors cause children to move away from the larger family network, testing the bonds of the extended and nuclear family. Seniors are an increasing proportion of our population and a "seniors' lifestyle" has been created. More people with physical and mental disabilities are achieving greater independence today in family settings within the community.

Changing and adapting to new circumstances creates stress and difficulty. People rely upon those around them for stable, supportive and loving relationships. We will continue to find stability and support in our families, in whatever form they take.

ORGANIZATION

A Symposium About Families was hosted by the Government of Saskatchewan and arranged by the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services.

Saskatchewan government officials initially met with representatives of the provinces and other interested agencies across Canada to identify the form and content of the symposium. An organizing committee was then struck and work began developing the conference.

The organizing committee was composed of:

Mr. Henry Kutarna, Deputy Minister of Social Services
Dr. Allan Hansen, Assistant Deputy Minister of Social Services
Mr. Dan Perrins, Executive Director of Family Services
Mr. Eric Johansen, Symposium Coordinator
Ms. Lynn Allan, Events Planning Coordinator
Ms. Brenda Szala, Events Planning Coordinator
Mr. Roy Rysavy, Staff Volunteer Coordinator
Mr. Lorne Dunsmore, Program Coordinator
Mr. Alan Gill, Communications

Over 200 volunteer staff from across the social services department and other Saskatchewan departments and agencies were involved in producing the symposium.

Panel Sessions

Persons from across Saskatchewan and Canada arranged for speakers and moderated panel sessions during the symposium.

Education and Families Panel:

Moderator - Diane Gagnon, Secretariat for Family Affairs, Quebec

Selectors - Donna Krawetz, Saskatchewan Education
- Carol Powell-Ariano, Saskatchewan Education
- Rita Archer, Saskatchewan Education

Law and Families Panel:

Moderator - Brian Barrington-Foote, Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Justice
Selector - Betty Ann Pottruff, Saskatchewan Justice

Work and the Family Panel:

Moderator - Vicki Bales, Director, Family Support, Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
Selectors - Joan Greaves, Saskatchewan Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department
- Linda Dewhirst, Saskatchewan Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department

The Health of Our Families:

Moderator - Stan Sojonky, Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan Health
Selector - Laura Carment, Saskatchewan Health

Serving Vulnerable Families Panel:

Moderator - Steven Rumsey, Public Trustee, Ministry of Attorney General, British Columbia
Selectors - Richard Hazel, Saskatchewan Social Services
- Linda Wrigley, Saskatchewan Social Services

The Family in the Community Panel:

Moderator - Carmen Moir, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Services, Nova Scotia
Selector - Dave Hedlund, Saskatchewan Social Services
Bob Creasy, Saskatchewan Social Services

Parenting Today Panel:

Moderator - Marie MacDonald, Director, Child and Family Services, P.E.I. Health and Social Services
Selectors - Trudy Usher, Saskatchewan Social Services
- David Rosenbluth, Saskatchewan Social Services

Family Income Panel:

Moderator - Sheila Devine, Asst Deputy Minister, Newfoundland Department of Children and Youth Services
Selector - Sheldon McLeod, Saskatchewan Social Services
Naomi Mellor, Saskatchewan Health

Canada's Families Today Panel:

Moderator - Doris Mae Oulton, Executive Director, Manitoba Women's Directorate
Selector - Brain Rector, Saskatchewan Social Services

Communication With and Within Families Panel:

Moderator - Stan Remple, Deputy Minister, Alberta Family and Social Services
Selector - Lorne Dunsmore, Saskatchewan Social Services

DOCUMENTS

Permanent records of **A Symposium About Families** were kept and are being made available to the provinces and to requesting delegates.

Because of the amount of information generated by the symposium, the documentation has been divided into three volumes:

Vol 1 SPEAKERS PAPERS,

Vol 2 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIODS, and

Vol 3 DELEGATES' WORKSHOPS.

Volumes 1 and 3 are being published during August 1989. Volume 2 will be published later, due to needs for amendment and consolidation of material.

A set of the three volumes of **A Symposium About Families** documentation may be ordered from:

Saskatchewan Social Services
1920 Broad Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3V6

The cost is $20 per set.

A Symposium
About Families

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PLENARY PRESENTATION OF DR. SUSAN MCDANIEL

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Dr. Susan McDaniel is a sociology professor at the University of Alberta and a recognized specialist in demography, family and gender, and the sociology of women, aging and health. She was the first recipient of the Casgrain Research Fellowship in 1987 and was professional woman of the year in Kitchener-Waterloo in 1988. She is the author of Social Problems Through Conflict and Order and Canada's Aging Population, as well as many articles.

PRESENTATION:

Good morning and welcome. It is indeed an honour to be part of this National Symposium on the Family--certainly an historical event in Canada. It is particulary gratifying to me and the many others who have made Canadian families our life's work to have so many people interested in families gathered in one place.

Knowlton Nash's kind introduction is a welcome improvement on an introduction I was given a few years ago when I talked about aging families. The person introducing me said, without being aware of the implications, I'm sure, said, "I ask you to welcome Dr. McDaniel who has had a lot of experience with aging!"

One need not be an expert on family or professionally involved with families to know that Canadian families, like families throughout the industrialized world, are changing. I will highlight only a few--to set the stage for my subsequent remarks and for the Symposium itself.

What are some of the changes in family forms in Canada today?

First family sizes smaller-and the birth rate is at an all time low.

As all of us know, the bottom, so to speak has fallen out of the baby market in the Western world. The title of a 1984 book on Canadian birth rates sums this up nicely: From Baby Boom to Baby Bust. The birth rate in Canada is at an all-time low, with Quebec's birth rate among the lowest in the world.

What we are experiencing is a massive shift all across the industrialized world toward streamlined childbearing.

A women born in Canada in 1841, for example, could expect to spend 32 years, on average, raising children with her last birth occurring at age 40. By contrast, a women born in 1951 spent 21 years raising children, with her last birth occurring at age 26 on average. Years spent in actual childbearing have been collapsed into a period of less than 2 years, compared to our grandmother's 12 plus years!

Of course, childbearing has changed too---The most notable trend today is the tendency for student, unemployed, or divorced/separated or never--married children of whatever age, to return to the family home in times of need. Today, the so called empty nest is being rapidly refilled!

Not only has the birth rate plummeted, but family size has shrunk significantly. the one-child family, the absolute minimum required for the experience of parenthood, may be becoming normative. This means that children less often will have the experience of growing up with siblings. Even with a two-child norm (existent in Canada for some time now), middle children have virtually disappeared.

Despite the seriousness with which Canadians control their fertility, it is incorrect to conclude that all babies born in Canada today are wanted. Until recently it had been presumed that babies born outside of marriage were generally unwanted, or at least unplanned. This was probably never fully true. Births to unmarried women, (thankfully no longer termed illegimate births!) have shifted recently from births to teenagers (which have stabilized since the late 1970's) to births to unmarried women in their 30's (which have increased two-fold in the same period). Of course, unwanted pregnancy can occur to a woman of any age, but it is more likely that at least some of the births to women in their 30's are actually planned. In a study by Myrna Kostash of Canadian teenage girls, the girls mentioned becoming mothers in the future, but often were less sure of becoming wives. So, baby carriages outside of marriage may be the way of the future if these young women act on their intentions. Second, there are decreases in marriage rates--changes in patterns of marriage.

Love and marriage still sometimes go together, but like horses and carriages, have changed with the times. In the resequencing of events, sometimes love (of various sorts) may take precedence, or even substitute for marriage altogether. Given the multiplicity of ways to be loving towards adults, towards our children, and towards older relatives, and the widely reported problems that some people see with traditional marriage, it may not be surprising that marriage and love do not go together as simply as in the past.

Cartoonists often capture social changes in a sharper way than social scientists. One comic that does this shows a couple being interviewed by a talk show host. The man is smoking a pipe and his wife is sitting on the arm of his chair decked out in an apron. The husband says, through the smoke of his pipe:

"Well, we were high school sweethearts, then we go married, bought a house in the suburbs and had 2.5 children. I smoke a pipe and wear slippers. She wears an apron and bakes cookies all day, and nobody in our family has been divorced, arrested or used foul language for any reason."

The aproned wife asks the talk show host. "But we still don't know why you asked us to be on the show."

Marriage is by no means going out of style. the vast majority of Canadians till marry and have children, and the majority half stay married.

Yet singlehood of various types in Canada is becoming a growth area. In 1986, for example 40% of the adult population in Canada was single. Most, of course, were young unmarried, but there are also the divorced, separated, and growing proportions who are widowed as the population ages. The percentage of Canadians living alone too, has risen from 1.8% in 1951 to 5.2% in 1986. Not all Canadians live in families--and the proportion who live alone is likely to increase in the future.

Nearly 1/3 of marriages taking place in Canada in 1986 were not first marriages for at least one of the parties--nearly 1/3! This has certainly been reflected in the wedding industry where bridal ensembles now often include dresses for the older bride and even the appropriate attire for the bride and groom's children.

Third, there has been a dramatic increase in cohabitation

Cohabiting couples, now seen by the Census of Canada as married, are growing in numbers. Cohabitation is, of course, not a new phenomenon in Canada--it was always relatively common among the poor. What is new is the increasing prevalence of cohabitation among middle class people of all ages. Some couples have taken to having "living together" celebrations. And, as always, the greeting card industry has kept up with the times.

It has been predicted that 3/4 of all North Americans will cohabit at some point in their lives.

Fourth, there is divorce changes

Although the rates have now stabilized and perhaps even dropped a little recently in Canada, divorce is still a common experience for many Canadians. The lower divorce rates of the past may not have indicated that marriages were happier than they are now, only that people had little choice but to stay in marriages that were unhappy. One of the most direct and heart-breaking consequences of the high divorce rate now (which incidentally is NOT high in Canada relative to other places in the world) is the large growth in the number of female lone parent families who live in poverty. This has led to enormous numbers of Canadian children who lack the basic essentials to grow up healthy, happy, and eager to contribute to society. It is estimated that in Canada today, approximately 1/3 of all children live in poverty. Surely in a country as wealthy and caring as Canada, this in unacceptable. And this should be given serious and immediate policy attention.

One of the most human explanations I've heard recently for marital longevity comes from a couple in South Dakota, allegedly the longest living married coupe int he world--they've been married 80 years! When asked, as long married couples always are, to what would they attribute their long marriage, the women said, "What the good Lord joined together shouldn't be tampered with." the man, at 101, hesitated for only a minute before he spoke," more---sooo---there's not much point arguing."

Fifth, in a far from complete list of family form changes in aging families

It is now estimated that a greater proportion of our lives is spent caring for older relatives than for children, marking a significant shift in family life patterns.

The challenges to families posed by aging are large and fundamental. It is now understood among sociologists and demographers, although less well among others, that population aging is the direct result of carefully planned parenthood, or in other words, of a decline in birth rate. The average age of the population increases as fewer and fewer young people enter the population.

The graph shown here is what is called a population pyramid--back--to--back bar graphs by year of age, for men and for women. The red portions are 1961 data, eroded at the bottom by the declining birth rate by 1985. So, there is a clear and direct link between being born and aging. When I gave a televised lecture at the University of Waterloo community in 1986, the artist drafting the poster announcing the lecture captured this relationship as few social scientists could.

One of the most serious challenges posed to families by aging is how to care for older relatives. Since women tend to outlive men by a considerable margin, more often it's women who are in need of care and help in their later years. And, it is more often women of middle-age who are called upon to do the care-giving, or to arrange the details of how it is to be done. This phenomenon of being caught in the middle of the needs of several generations has been termed a "sandwich" for middle-aged women. The sandwich, however, can have several layers. Let me give one example. A woman of 45 whose mother of 65 is in need of some help with her house, has a grandmother of 85 who needs a lot of looking after, as well as a mother-in-law and a maiden aunt who need some assistance from time to time. In addition, the 45 year old women has a teenager still at home who causes her great concern (as many teenagers do at some point these days!) Her older daughter whose marriage has fallen apart, has returned home with her two children and is now looking for a job. This woman is experiencing a caregiver crunch, not a typical today. She is very likely to feel guilty about not doing enough to help these people. In addition, some policy-makers are saying that caring for older relatives should be more familial than it is---adding further worry and concern to our 45 year old woman who is already doing more than she can. A challenge indeed---and one that is not likely to diminish as time goes on.

In looking toward Canada in the future as an aging society, it should be kept in mind that aging is hopeful. It is hopeful in the sense that Mark Twain mentioned---it beats the alternative---of dying young! At the societal level, aging is also hopeful in that is an indication of society's successful control over fertility and mortality, so that more and more people can live as long as possible. Aging also gives us individually and collectively, a sense of wisdom. One way to see this is expressed well by JoAnna Russ of the University of Washington.

Family problems are another aspect of family about which we hear a great deal. Family problems such as marital discord, family violence, incest, sexual abuse are thought by some to be increasing. Although possibly true, this is not really known and in the case of child abuse, as shown by a recent Canadian study, we now have a pretty good idea that incidence is no higher today than it ever has been. The first reliable studies of incidence of wife battering, as one example, were only done in the mid-1970's. Some family problems, such as incest and elder abuse, have yet to be reliably estimated in Canada, although available data suggest that these problems are much more common than previously thought.

Family violence too was (and still is) underestimated---the family is now widely acknowledged as being the most dangerous place in society, with the probability of being murdered by a family member very much higher than the probability of being murdered by a stranger!

More attention is now being given to the darker side of families than in the past. Still far from sufficient to aid those in need, we are now acknowledging the existence of problems with families as never before.

Despite prevalent beliefs to the contrary and a fair measure of wishful thinking, families are not separate from society, not private places in which we retreat from society, but an integral part of society, and thus, intertwined with social changes in the wider world. Large-scale societal changes such as cost of living, changing social and gender roles, widespread historical changes, Canada's changing place in the world economy and political system, among many other factors, cannot help but have implications for families. Families are both a springboard for and a haven from changes in the wider society.

Many of us have impressions, perhaps sold to us by Hollywood or nostalgia mongers, that families until recently were uniform, happy, unchanging, and well-suited to meeting our needs. For example, children, when asked about families in times past, often mention images of big happy families gathered around the Thanksgiving table or Christmas tree.

Seldom mentioned in these happy pictures are the grim realities of the Canadian past such as high rates of infant and child mortality, and frequent reliance of families on the wages of children. A study of Hamilton, Ontario during Canada's transition from an agricultural to an industrial society in the mid 19th century, estimates that families were supported largely by the labours of their children. Adult mortality was so high that the chances of being orphaned by age 14 was approximately one in three. Single-parent families thus are part of Canada's history and not at all a new phenomena. In fact, single parents were more common in Canada in the early part of the 20th century than they are now. The cause of single parenthood, of course, was more often widowhood than it is now, when it is more often a result of divorce or separation, but the consequences for families may not have been much different in terms of pain, poverty, and disruption.

Aging relatives also were treated differently in the past than film scripts and TV sometimes have us believe. The image of the large, caring family enjoying the company and the wisdom of Grandma and Granddad, fades quickly when it is realized that as recently as a few generations ago, few families would have had the luxury of even having elderly relatives. Large extended families living together in one household were rare in Canadian experience in the past. Approximately 80% of families at any given time in Canada's past lived in two-generation nuclear families. When multiple generations shared households, it was most often because of financial need, rather than preference. Sometimes, older widowed mothers were turned away form the family farm so that sons and their families could live in the farm house and "inherit" the farm before the last generation passed out of existence. Rural widows were the first known group of homeless people in North America and continental Europe.

When I think about Canadian families of the past and how we tend to view them today, I am reminded of the comments of Milan Kundera, the Czech novelist now living in Paris. He reminds us:

> "The past is full of life, eager to irritate us, provoke us,
>
> and insult us, tempt us to destroy or repaint it."

Family fictions are not confined to those who write television or film scripts, or novels. Contemporary society is often seen and compared to rosy pictures of families of the past. These fictional images can be more real than reality at times. We, for example, can long for the family life of the Campbell's, the Anderson's (of Father Knows Best),or the Nelson's, or for Mom's apple pie, even if we are happy with our real-life families or know full well that our Mom might never have made apple pie! We long for what we think we might have had in the past, even as we know that what we long for might never have existed! The World We Have Lost Syndrome. Another way to see this tendency is captured nicely in the title of the late actress, Simore Sigouret's autobiography, Nostagia Ain't What It Used To Be!

Monitoring and explaining family changes in Canada in the late 1980's can be a challenge indeed.

--Family changes occurring today are complex, wide-reaching, and intertwined in such a way that they are difficult to understand in simple terms, even by the best analysts of family change.

--Adding to the challenge are the emotional attachments we have to family, as well as to our hopes for what family could be, has been, oris for everyone else but us, it seems. In my large undergraduate classes in sociology of the family. I begin by asking the students to write down, anonymously, one positive and one negative experience they have had with family. Many students get quizzical looks on their faces when asked, perhaps for the first time, about negative experience with family. A very high percentage end up leaving the negative question unanswered--with many reporting after thinking it over, that they have always thought family experiences were supposed to be good. It must be kept in mind that first and second year university students have only recently come out of the most turbulent years of parent-child relations in the life cycle of the family--the years of adolescence. If these young people cannot think of one, even mildly negative family experience, it is highly likely that they are deceiving themselves, than that they all come from families that are the Alberta equivalent of the Cosby's. People have a tendency to substitute what they think family should be for their own lived experiences.

Other students who report incidents of an alcoholic parent, family violence, sexual abuse, a mental health problem, or a family in crisis over the decision of what to do with an aging grandparent, are surprised, amazed and dismayed that their fellow students seem to have had such perfect family experiences. Those students who have trouble thinking of a single negative experience with family tend to be less sympathetic to the other students who report a negative experience quickly. Our beliefs about family colour what we see, how we interpret it, and how we react to others' experiences. The family becomes idealized as well as ideologized, with lived reality having little bearing on what we see families to be.

--Family, once thought to be private and no one's business but one's own (and perhaps the parish priest's), has emerged as an important issue on Canada's policy agenda. This conference attests to the importance of family to policy in Canada in the late 1980's. Day care, reproductive rights and women's roles in the family and in the work place are subjects of intense debate in Canada today. All are issues related to family. There is concern in some circles, both governmental and academic, about the historic low level to which the birth rate has fallen in Canada, particularly in Quebec. There is also concern about population aging in Canada. Even such recent large-scale changes in Canada as the Meech Lake Accord and the Free Trade Agreement, are being discussed in terms of their implications for families.

--Not a political election goes by but what family is front and centre in Canada today. Family has been said to have become the buzzword of the 1980's--a word repeated so often that its meaning may no longer be apparent. Among recent election campaigns in Canada, a trend seems evident. Every political party campaigns on family issues--with each party, and sometimes each candidate, taking a different view on what is important to families, and each arguing that should it win, they will help and support families. This led one commentator to say of the provincial election in Alberta (but I hasten to add that this comment could apply equally to the recent election in Prince Edward Island), the politicians, in campaigning for office seem interested in the "Triple E" family: emotional, electable, and exploitable. Family is the ultimate "motherhood issue"--certainly difficult to be against, and yet fuzzy as a political issue.

--There are still other challenges to those who seek to understand and explain contemporary families and family changes. Technological change is one such challenge. We are to have a Royal Commission on reproductive technologies. In the new reproductive technologies, I include so-called surrogate motherhood (although it is not new and not really technological), along with in vitro fertilization, embryo transfers, and artificial insemination among other techniques. So far, these technologies have had a low success rate and a limited clientele. Yet, the implications for families in the future may be both broad and profound.

Two quick examples. With many of the new reproductive technologies, biological parents and legal-social parents become distinct and separate. Very often the biological parent relinquishes his or her parental rights and responsibilities. This separates social from biological parenting in a way not previously done, except in cases where women give up their babies for adoption at birth. It also alters the reproductive relationships between men and women in that strangers can together biologically parent a child. At the same time, the new reproductive technologies give an importance to biological parenthood which in the past was perhaps not as salient. For example, the very availability of in-vitro fertilization, even with rates of success that are only around 5 to 10%, may encourage childless couples to seek the procedure rather than adopting a child, or simply remaining childless and acting in a parental way to nieces, nephews, or friend's children.

--Then, there are the unexpected challenges on the family front. One that comes immediately to mind is AIDS. Here of course there are the fears among some young people that they should not risk possible exposure to AIDS and thus they may opt out of the dating scene or confine their search to a small group of persons well-known to them. Or, alternatively, young people might settle quickly on what they think is a life's partner, only to discover subsequently that they made a poor choice. A greater fear though may be of founding families in a world gone so awry that we can no longer be assured that we are in control. AIDS in this instance becomes a kind of metaphor for a world that young people feel they cannot control.

--And last in a far from comprehensive list, is the challenge of the changing economic picture with which families must live. The demise of the family wage combines with the increasing cost of living, has meant that many families need two incomes on which to live. This has led one family sociologist to report the end of the "me-breadwinner--you-everything-else" view of the family.

Despite the above mentioned challenges to monitoring and explaining family changes, most of us would probably agree that family is an important, perhaps even the most important, social institution. It remains profoundly important to us as individuals. Family membership is a dominant fact of life for most of us--a place where we try to establish close, supportive, emotional relationships; a place where we develop an identity and become fully human; a place where we acquire a sense of values, and care for others as well as ourselves; and a place for a passing on tradition and wealth (both tangible and intangible). Kinship is woven into the fabric of society and culture. The sorts of caring skills we acquire as members of families stay with us for life and can help us to resolve problems.

Yet the definition of what a family is remains elusive.

The Census of Canada defines a family as: a husband and a wife (with or without children who have never married, regardless of age), or a lone parent of any marital status, with one or more children who have never married, regardless of age, living in the same dwelling unit. For census purposes, persons living in a common-law type of arrangements are considered now married, regardless of their legal marital status...

The Vanier Institute of the Family prefers to talk about "familial relationships", rather than the family. This allows fro a more encompassing view of family that gets beyond the kinship base. As sociologist Michele Barrett says, "caring, sharing, and loving might be more widespread if the family did not claim them [almost exclusively] for its own."

A definition of family which is both useful an satisfying, although unexpected, is one provided by Dorothy Smith:

> the family is a place where people are stored when they are not at work, where they are maintained, serviced, fed, and cleaned, where they are psychologically repaired and the injuries of daily routine and tensions generated on the job made good, and where the next generation of employees is produced and trained for their future occupational roles.

(Smith, Dorothy, "Women's Roles and Corporate Capitalism," in Marylee Stephenson, Women in Canada. Gage, 1973:22)

Whatever definition of family we prefer, it seems clear that the family, one way of being familial, increasingly poses problems. In talking about the family, similar kinds of caring committed human groups are excluded. This is by no means an academic point. Exclusion can involve denial of legitimacy which can be stigmatizing as well as punishing, if benefits (both social and economic) given to families are denied to what are perceived as non-families. In this way, family policies can, do, and have worked against families. Flexibility and inclusiveness in defining what constitutes a family seem essential in these times of family and social change.

Whatever definition of family we have, families by their very nature embody change and history. This is a paradox of tradition. A static, uniform, unchanging family is a contradiction in terms--growth, birth, death and generational change are a fundamental part of what families are. Even those of us who achieve the ideal family--Mom, Dad, a kid or two, but not more, and perhaps a dog--and even if the marriage lasts and is happy, find ourselves living in that ideal family form for smaller and smaller portions of our lives.

Just as families embody change, the needs of families also change. Families age, children leave home, some family members may experience illness or disability. This does not indicate that family is falling apart or in crisis. It rather means families cannot be expected at all times and at all stages in their life cycles, to meet the needs of all members completely and perfectly. In addition, of course, there are families and always will be families with special needs of various sorts. A few examples might be families in which one or more persons are disabled, poor families, native families or families, for any number of reasons, whose members might not have equal access to society's resources. In developing policies sensitive to Canada's many cultures, it should be kept fairly in mind that family forms and practices fit together with cultural beliefs.

Why the growing interest in family today in Canada?

Recently, the interest in families as part of society has been elevated, with a fair number of problems and issues that were previously defined as falling into other realms, not being defined as family issues. For example, drug and sex education are being discussed now as family issues, or at least issues with a strong family component. Aging is also being placed in the context of family--in terms of responsibility and caring for the elder relative. The list goes on. It is as if family is becoming the new paradigm around which many public issues now cluster. This is rather like Lee Ioaccoa's paradigm of success--which once in place becomes the lens through which everything is viewed.

Accounting for some of the growth in interest in the family is the belief held by some, including some politicians and academics, that the family, as we know it, may be becoming an "endangered species". Gone, lament some, are the days of yore in which happy families worked together, prayed together, and stayed together through thick and thin, gone are the days when Mom stayed at home and raised the kids and Dad toiled hard to provide support. Instead, it is suggested, there is nothing but problems--divorce, abuse, poverty, unwanted children, adolescent disrespect, runaways, and possibly worst of all, women who cannot afford to or do not want to work only at home and in raising children! Forgotten in these images, of course, is that family change cannot be stopped while society continues to change. Also overlooked is the fact that many of the problems being talked about openly today, or at least more openly than in the past, always existed, but people called them life and suffered in silence.

The widely acknowledged turn to more conservative times in another explanation for the growing political interest in the family today. Small "c" conservative thinking sees strong families as central to society. Families, organized into discrete units, maximise individual freedoms and allow the political apparatus to assume a less visible role.

Focus on the family, similar to that which is happening today, occurred in 19th century Canada when politicians were convinced that the family as they knew it, would collapse under industrialization. Policies were instituted which redefined women's roles to be more home and family--centred. Compulsory education was implemented to address problems created by "idle youth." Similarly, Australia in the nineteenth century experienced sharp declines in the birth rate which caused pundits and politicians alike to "mourn" the demise of marriage and family.

Some of these concerns were expressed in verse in the Australian magazine, Punch, in the later part of the 19th century.

The growth of knowledge about the family in society and about problems within families has caused greater attention to be paid. Evidence is mounting that families are not the idealized havens we wish they could be. It is difficult for caring members of society to sit back comfortably and say, so be it. Active intervention seems important and necessary.

Family is difficult to oppose politically. For this reason, in times of uncertainty, it is a rock in a storm. In focusing on family, however, we must be vigilant in reminding ourselves that family policies must be sensitive to families as they are, not as we might wish them to be. Policies minimally must not diminish the capacities of families of any type. And, hopefully, should facilitate in carrying on their important work for society.

Everyone is interested in the family on two levels--and these are often very difficult to separate. At the personal level, family is a constant challenge--it occupies much of our daily thought, we agonize over what to do, how to handle problems. Thus, when we begin to think about family at the societal level, it is not surprising that the personal becomes public. Those lucky enough to have had good experiences with family may want us all to benefit from their joys, even as they recognize that families, like individual people, cannot be mass-marketed. Those with negative family experiences tend to blame themselves, or significant others in their families for their misfortunes. In either case, family problems tend to be individualized and privatized, while family successes are celebrated.

It is very difficult indeed to tear down our blinders about the family.

Let me share with you a story told by Lois Wilson, the former Moderator of the United Church of Canada as an example:

This is a conversation between a 65 year old man and a young doctor whom he is visiting for the first time:

"Tell me," asks the doctor, "how old was your father when he died?"

"Did I say that my father had died?" responds the patient.

"No, you didn't," says the doctor, "I'm terribly sorry. I suppose I just took it for granted. How old is your father then?"

"He's 85 and he is, I'm glad to say, in excellent health."

"Excellent," replied the doctor, "Perhaps you can tell me how old your grandfather was when he died?"

"Did I say that my grandfather had died?"

"No, I guess you didn't. Once again, I just took it for granted. Well then, how old is your grandfather?"

"He's 105 and as a matter of fact, he's just gotten married for the second time."

"I'm amazed and impressed," says the doctor, "but you must tell me, why would a man his age want to get married again."

"Did I say that he wanted to get married?"

It is certainly wise to be careful of the assumptions we make about family and family life.

In concluding, I would like very briefly to share with you my thoughts on five values that seem worth considering if family policies with real life, contemporary families in mind, are to be developed.

First, family policies ought to acknowledge that not all families are equal. Children are given, or not given, a crucial jumpstart by their families--and this determines their capacity and likelihood of contributing to society like no other fact of life does.

Second, social welfare is often the vital link between some families and society. Steps should be taken to recognize the dignity of families on social assistance and, most importantly, facilitate their return to genuine self-sufficiency.

Third, caring for our young, our old, and each other must be legitimized by society as important work. The skills we learn by caring and being cared for are important in the prevention of problems for families, for individuals, and for society.

Fourth, sustainability of our human relationships must be a priority. Children cannot be seen only as workers or consumers of the future, but as people with the capacity to care for families of the future, for us in our older years, and for our planet.

And last, we cannot afford to glorify our images of what families should be, while we continue to neglect the heart-rending challenges faced by some Canadian families who still live in poverty, despair or isolation.

Thank you and best wishes for the remainder of the Symposium.

PLENARY PRESENTATION OF MAURICE CHAMPAGNE

Dr. Maurice Champagne
Dr. Champagne is former special advisor to the Quebec Minister of Family Policy. During 1984, the Quebec government, which had committed itself in 1981 to the drafting of a family policy, called on Dr. Champagne to serve as a contractual Deputy Minister. In this capacity, he directed preparation of a Green Paper, presided over consultations on family policy and implemented policies. His commitment to family policy is closely tied to his position on the demographic future of Quebec and the issue of male-female relationships. Dr. Champagne has written two books: La violence au pouvoir and La Famille et l'omme a delivrer du Pouvoir. He is presently working on another, to address musculine culture.

PRESENTATION:

Thank you for your invitation, issued at your own risk . . . The title asks a question and is doubtless appropriate at the end of a mandate such as the one I attempted to carry out for the Government of Quebec as well as Quebec society. Because family policy is essentially a collective undertaking, with multiple responsibilities, it reaches beyond governmental functions even though the government is chiefly responsible for its implementation. And we have to realize that it is no easier to think family within a government than in any society in Canada and the Western world. I insist on the expression "think family," because it points to the engine of government activity seeking to adapt its policies to family reality.

With your permission, I will preface my presentation with a few remarks on the context.

Preliminary

Apart from my professional experience as a researcher, author and deputy minister, I approach this lecture, this symposium, above all as a father. I dare to speak to you because I have children.

Incidentally, the parent(s)-child(ren) relationship forms the basis of the Family Policy Statement the Quebec government adopted December 9, 1987 and that must, in a way, guide the general thrust of this policy. This is a major decision, one which is not yet reflected in the Civil Code. There is still a good deal of confusion between family, marriage, de facto union, in short between the range of parental statuses and the family as such.

It seems to me that, at a basic level, we have to agree on the fact that delineating the family, demography, family policy and population are DEVELOPMENT choices and operations, in the sense that is understood when we say that a country is developed or developing . . . What is a developed Canada? What is a developed family? What are developed parents? What are developed children? It might be more useful simply to ask you to answer these questions.

I will go through three stages in raising these development issues. The first one underscores the extreme complexity of the undertaking at the intellectual, social, political, economic and other levels. The second emphasizes that the most essential questions concern the crisis in values affecting the West, hence Canada and especially Quebec, which I have often described since the 1970s as "the society of crazed catholics." The third one presents development choices that, I tell you right now, are perhaps utopian, given the peculiar civilization we live in. The French author and humanist, Georges Bernanos, had a particularly apt way of describing this kind of civilization; he said: "For them, life is lived at the feeding trough." Others say: "They waste food and amuse themselves . . . and, amid the abundance of their civilization, the ranks of the poor and the homeless grow ever larger."

Finally, my fourth and last comment and, in my humble opinion, the most important. It may be the most decisive factor in the development of family policy and, in particular, could spare us, professionals, public servants, university people, workers in organizations, from making inappropriate, even needlessly costly, recommendations to politicians and the public. It is the ethical awareness of the influence of ideologies and personal values regarding the family, couples, parents, etc. For example, a public servant or professional may be recently divorced, a single-parent or living in a multiple-parent situation, but that does not mean he or she should transpose his or her frustrations or feelings of aggression against the family, the couple or parents into his work, into the sociology of his country. That is a problem of consistency and ethics. I could tell you stories of I don't know how many private members's bills that attempted to convince the public and the government that a collective black is an individual which. And **in a world in which the basic social reality is the war of the sexes**, which in general nobody wants to admit, it may be very painful to propose positions affecting men and women for case "x" or "y," and be able to separate them ethically from the personal realities concerning these issues that have us on edge. Things would be easier if we would be more willing to recognize socially and politically that in the West, currently, the major social, parental, family and demographic problem is the war of the sexes and the confusion we face with respect to the questioning of traditional male and female roles, our reaction to such and such a form of feminism and, perhaps especially, and this is directed exclusively to men, with respect to our ability to think personally and socially on the realignment of male-female relations. The Government of Quebec has just gone through a painful and costly process to develop a bill (146) which you may have heard of and which focuses on, in a confused way, family property and conjugal rights. There are reasons for this, and many of them affect the problems I have just sketched out.

At a time when budgetary resources are scarce, beware of indulging too often in the luxury of ideological confrontations, whether acknowledged or, especially, unacknowledged.

Now it is time to consider the stages I mentioned. I will try to deal with them as schematically as possible, so as not to take too long, but also to give you some of the essence of the years of learning that lie behind this presentation.

Stage One

The reality of family and the reality of demography are extremely complicated. Beware then of the danger of partial solutions with a quasi-mythological appeal that are frequently recommended here and there. Here are some topics to think about:

- The changes affecting the reality of the family in Quebec over the past quarter of a century are unprecedented in their speed and scope.

Here are some statistics that can be compared to the situation in the other provinces and in Canada as a whole:

- In 1961, the percentage of married persons in Quebec was 90%; in 1985, it was 49%.

- The percentage of divorces, that is the divorces/marriages ratio on an annual basis, excluding separations and breakdown of de facto unions, was 6.2% in 1969 and 42.7% in 1985.

- The total fertility rate, that is the average number of children per woman, was 3.9 in Quebec in 1960 and is now 1.3.

- Almost 60% of mothers of children from 0 to 6 are now on the labour market. You know what the situation was 25-30 years ago.

- Is there anyone who does not know of our no-so-distant history of very large families? According to 1985 statistics, in Quebec, 38% of married couples are childless, 28% of families have one child, 25% have two, 8% have three and 2% four or more.

I could go on for a long time with these amazing statistics. But are we not reaping, in so many ways, what we have sown? By a series of habits (and cultural attributes), particularly our habit of taking the family for granted, whereas today families have to be earned virtually one at a time and at great cost. By our habit of separating the private from the public, the personal from the social, the individual from the collective, whereas in reality, except perhaps in the bureaucratic mind, people live together. Through our habit of basing policy on the individual or the community in general, by almost always assimilating the family to the individual or collective, whereas the family is essentially a linkage point of life and development between the person and society, its first manifestation.

May I ask you, very seriously, in the name of what ideological stubbornness, what intellectual narrowness, do otherwise cultivated and educated people insist on maintaining that the family is a phenomenon of the right, a conservative force? It may be used by governments as a right-wing tool, but that does not mean it should be identified with the right. We should not confuse role with nature, role with function. The family is a value for development; it is ageless, belonging neither to the right nor to the left.

- Furthermore, do we not betray our crying lack of research specifically focused on the family? We have begun to take an interest now that it has started to collapse, more often than not with a fragmented outlook, where our ideological concepts of the family clash.

- No opportunity is lost, in the media and even in professional services centres, to cast stones at the family and parents for the problems of young people, for violence, whose causes lie not in the family, but in the type of society that shapes it.

- We often feel that the institution of family is highly controlling and prescriptive toward the individual behaviour of its members. That may be true, but only if we admit that the family is itself programmed by other social institutions, religious institutions in former years, and for the past twenty-five years, to an amazing extent, by television. In terms of a typical image, I would say that the family has been, and still is, to the management of society what women were to men, until the feminist revolution.

- As for the demographic issue itself, first of all, we have to see that its origin does not lie in the family, but derives from individual behaviour and social values toward children and quality of life. On that topic, I would like to make a comment which I hope will reach the ears of the politicians most directly responsible for the future development of family policy. It has to do with our situation and that prevailing in European countries, particularly France and Austria.

  Compared to these two countries, in terms of family policy and incentives to have children, we truly are a developing society, at both the provincial and federal levels. Yet, despite the extraordinary family policies in place in France and Austria, the birthrate in these countries is declining to alarming levels, almost as low as ours, other things being equal, taking their family policy traditions into account. When I asked European experts about this phenomenon, the most frequent answer I received was: "There are two major variables we cannot control--changes in values among individuals and in society on the one hand, and everything that happens among men and women, on the other."

That gives us a great deal to think about concerning the political choices we have to make here.

Stage Two

a) The Crisis in Values

Once again, in the second stage, I will simply put forward some items for reflection concerning the two points I just mentioned in relation to the European situation, namely the crisis in values and the crisis in relations between the sexes.

Concerning the crisis in values, we have simply to ask ourselves what incentive is there to commit oneself, and I insist on the word and the reality of commitment, to starting a family and forming parental relations that will be lasting, supportive, warm, passionate, liberating, creative, provide a fertile ground for personal identity, social belonging, and so much more, in a Western society dominated by rampant consumption, by purchasing power, which has become the ultimate power, the discriminating value of good parents? Dominated by the ferocious conflict between individualism and the sense of community, between self-sufficiency and inter-dependence? Dominated by the rationalization of procreation and the choice not to have children, or to have one or two, with an unending stream of assessments on all sorts of social, economic, political, even planetary failures. I am thinking of pollution and violence between nations and between individuals. Ultimately, these assessments tell the consciences of so many people not to multiply life, in the very name of respect for life.

A society dominated, I return to it because it is so important, by the competition between the enormous influence of television and parental influence on children and adolescents? (You are perhaps aware of the fascinating theory put forward by the American, Neil Postman, in his book, The Disappearance of Childhood, that television may, within 15 years, lead to the extinction of childhood because television will cancel adult cultural influence and place the child on the same footing as the adult, if not a higher one). A society dominated by the mythology of instantaneousness, efficiency and success, in conflict with the sense of duration of learning and commitment, values that are essential to any family project, just as to any worthwhile conjugal or human project? A society dominated by dialectic materialism that, in particular, imposes socially the value of objects and the material by understanding the value of persons and, more than anything else, the growth of persons, the very reason for the family's existence? A society dominated by a confusion of sexuality with love, even according to sexologists? A society dominated by the image, in so many forms, of the child a nuisance, a problem, an obstacle to human happiness, though care is taken to invoke its extraordinary benefits in terms of truly human growth and of love . . . perhaps the only love today of which it can be thought that it can take us from life to death, in spite of problems it will have thrown up along the way for parents and children?

Well! I invite you to think long and hard on all these aspects and a host of others I have not mentioned and which, in my humble opinion, it is our duty, as public servants, as professionals, to bring to the attention of politicians and the society around us.

b) The Crisis in Relations Between the Sexes

The crisis in male-female relations is at the heart of this crisis in values. In fact I have no hesitation in saying that along with economic upheavals--and the birth control revolution that is one of the main foundations of the feminist revolution--this crisis is the main factor in family upheavals and the demographic decline. Here again are just a few references to the dimensions of the crisis:

- In the background, we must remind ourselves that the western nuclear family is particularly fragile because of its almost total dependence on marriage and the couple, depriving itself, in its narrow scope, of the community and collective benefits of the extended family, as we know it in most oriental civilizations.

- The marriage locomotive pulling the family wagon is therefore derailing in our culture. The same holds true of the de facto union locomotive. This shows that some of the problems we so desperately wanted to lay at the feet of the institution of marriage must rather be attributed to social and interpersonal relations between men and women.

- At the same time, the couple is denounced and divorce made mundane. Yet, in spite of this, conflict surrounding custody of children after a separation is proliferating.

- The scourge of physical violence against women continues to grow.

- The feminist revolution continues to progress unilaterally in many regards, women forcing changes in social and family roles and men generally submitting to them or opposing them.

- If paternity does not become for men what maternity was for women, I have serious doubts about the future of the family and of the planet.

- And if equality between men and women is achieved through a one-way feminist revolution, of women's roles and values towards men's roles and values, should we not fear that the world will become even more hostile to children and therefore to values of being, personhood, human relations, the capacity to feel?

- That is why I feel the main issue raised by male-female relations in terms of the family and demography is that of responsibility for the child. The main issue is to know whether or not men, collectively and individually, in Canada as in most countries on the globe, are ready to and interested in dividing responsibility for the child with women. And can the condition for that kind of division be arranged, in the medium term, in the organization of work as well as in the organization of the family? It seems to me that this very practical question of the arrangement of the social and economic division of this responsibility concerning the child is crucial in relation to the purposes of this Symposium.

This arrangement concerns the main components of family policy and therefore the main social supports to be given to parents and children. This is as much the responsibility of the workplace as of government.

These major supports, these major elements of family policy, are:

- division of work time with flexible and varied schedules;
- parental leave for fathers and mothers;
- a variety of types of daycare services, where imagination, daring, and creativity can be brought to bear on the challenges facing us because of our under-development in this area and our budgetary constraints.

Stage Three

We come now to the third stage of this presentation. Here, I would simply like to propose three development choices which are, above all, choices of values on which to base political and economic choices that will enable us to truly implement a serious family policy.

ONE Base society and the family on the shared management, between men and women of all forms of life and of development.

TWO Base society and the family on the shared growth of the adult and the child.

THREE Act to enable the family to become a creative and liberating nucleus of human development for its members and society.

That is how I think, very humbly, perhaps very personally, Canada could innovate in terms of development and acquire, through all its social, economic and political components, a creative dimension.

The first choice is a response I feel we have to give to the feminist revolution, so that it can give rise to a revolution of roles that will allow us to grow from the ancient separation of roles and powers to sharing. But it is also a response that can lead us to assume what I call the couple's social and political function, the male-female couple that is the source of all human life (unless we choose to use new reproductive technologies to alter this natural source of development).

I feel the time has come on this planet for men and women to share together in the management of life under all its forms, political, economic, cultural, social, family, affective, intellectual, etc.

I feel the time has also come to demystify our view of the couple and to support it socially, as a preferred and individual experience of inter-personal relations, by giving it this political basis of social management shared by men and women.

Need I add that according to the ancient Aristotelian distinction, "the politician" and "politics" would merge at the point.

The second choice invites us to rethink and relive deeply the adult-child or adult-adolescent relationship. Since the second world war, we have certainly made much progress in the West in our approaches to educating the child and the adolescent, as well as in recognizing their rights. However, I think the bulk of what education has to offer in terms of its most humanizing aspects is yet to come. This would mean realizing that the development of the child and of the adolescent is the chief mechanism for adult growth. In other words, educating a child is the best opportunity for the adult to reeducate him or herself as a person, since the values of the child's and adolescent's growth are recognized as fundamental values that are necessary at every age.

For instance, when the child learns to walk or to talk, this puts us in contact with facts that are indispensable for achieving independence, as much for the adult as for the child. The characteristics of that magic time of life, emotional capacity, the power of dreams, the sense of creativity, are values that every self-respecting adult should incorporate. Yet we realize the extent to which capacity for emotional development has been amputated from male culture, and thus from the very social culture of communities governed by men.

When these questions are considered from this point of view, genetic psychology is not the only thing at issue. We are also educating ourselves in family life and, even more specifically, we are entering the barely explored area of "parental jurisdiction".

I wish I had hours to speak to you about parental jurisdiction; its acquisition by society must be seen as one of the first objectives of any genuine family policy in out time.

PARENTAL JURISDICTION IS BOTH THE PARENT'S CAPACITY TO TAKE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD AND THE ADOLESCENT IN HAND AND THE SOCIAL SUPPORTS THE PARENT MUST RELY ON TO ACQUIRE THIS CAPACITY.

In fact, all sectors of family policy could be seen as means intended for parents to enable them to acquire, develop, perfect and exercise this parental jurisdiction, provided the two major aspects of this jurisdiction are distinguished: personal development, that is everything affecting the shared growth of the parent and the child, their intrinsic development, and the "social support for parents" aspect, which deals specifically with social conditions, social and economic services with which parents must be provided to make their contribution to society, that is to take charge of children at least until their majority. An absolutely extraordinary contribution which we should recognize as being at the very base of our society, but which we have unfortunately rendered mundane by viewing it as natural, instinctive and private.

For example, the first aspect includes all measures for education in family life and parental responsibility designed to make parents aware of the basic needs of children, needs which are in addition to the range of primary needs, such as food and rest, and affect the main components of human personality, such as security, autonomy, the will to live, personal identity, and social belonging. How many families, how many schools, how many professional circles have an awareness that to fulfil these basic needs is the family's major task, as well as being one of the social and educational undertakings most likely to contribute to making our societies more human?

The second aspect naturally includes all the measures of social recognition, economic compensation, and specialized services for normally-functioning families and those in difficulty. For instance, assisting parents to obtain suitable family shelter is the housing aspect of family policy, and this aspect is essential to the material dimension of parental jurisdiction, parental instrumentation. Providing compensation for the economic costs of taking children in hand, through family allowances and tax measures, is part of the aspect of family policy dealing with economic support for families and parents. All the measures I mentioned earlier relating to parental leave, flexible and varied work hours, and daycare services, make up another crucial aspect of family policy and parental instrumentation, to be provided day to day, if parents are to be able to reconcile their parental responsibilities and their work duties. Mediation services, that have become necessary for parents in difficulty, like services for violent family members, belong to the broad range of social services needed for the development of parental jurisdiction and make up another key sector of family policy.

Finally, in this context, may I boldly point out that the second volume of the report of the Committee on the family policy consultation, held in Quebec in 1985 and which I had the honour of chairing, contains a detailed listing, with their functions, of a set of sectors making up what we call family policy. The second part of the report is entitled: The Collective Support Recommended for Families in Quebec.

It is time and totally appropriate to bring this lecture to a close with the notion of parental jurisdiction and the indispensable social support it requires from the community and government. This is the major application of the third development choice I put forward in this third stage, so that families can be creative and liberating nuclei of human development for their members and for society in general.

To think of family, to think of family policy, forces us, today and in the future, to review our very concept of the social. We have to rediscover that the first two human atoms of social growth are the man-woman couple and the parent(s)-child(ren) couple. By limiting ourselves to considering the social and giving it preference practically in terms of economic classes, employment opportunity and forms of education cut off from family growth, I feel we are substantially reducing our chances of humanizing our development. We need the family, as institution, and families individually. We need to recognize the extraordinary social function of parents and support it accordingly, to help all of us, collectively and individually, to become persons, citizens, capable of liberty, of creativity, independence, security, and social belonging. I come back to them. I repeat these basic needs. I consider them the essence of the best of human potential.

In short, to support the family, to help parents carry out their profession of parent, the most beautiful and most important, though the most difficult of all professions in the world, along with that of teacher, is to contribute directly to the development of democracy and the quality of civilization.

Are the ministers of our provincial and federal governments ready to recognize it? If yes, are they ready to make the political and economic choices necessary if they are to be consistent with this recognition of the essential?

PLENARY PRESENTATION OF DR. JAMES GARBARINO

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Dr. James Garbarino is President of the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development. He is an internationally recognized expert on child development, particularly social development and child abuse. He has written several books and many articles. His most recent book, The Future As If It Really Mattered ponders the future of families and society in a broad geopolitical context. Dr. Garbarino was the 1988 recipient of the American Humane Association's Vincent De Francis Award. He is a two time recipient of the Mitchel Prize from the Woodlands Conference of Sustainable Societies, and in 1987 he was elected President of the American Psychological Association's Division on Children, Youth and Family Services.

PRESENTATION:

It's always a pleasure for me to come to Canada. I find it a refreshing breath of political and moral fresh air to cross the border. I have Canadian relatives and over the years have visited all the provinces but one. I think for me one of the most telling examples of why it's such a breath of fresh air was communicated in a newspaper article about Detroit. It seems that a group of homicide detectives from the Detroit police force were on a field trip, and they crossed the border into Windsor just on the other side of the border and visited their colleagues in the homicide division there. When the American detectives from Detroit came into the squadroom, on the wall was a list headed: "Pending homicide cases" with 3 names on it, and the Detroit detectives said: "Boy, you guys had a busy weekend didn't you." And the Windsor detective said: "Weekend? Those were our cases for the whole year."

They say if you ask a fish to describe water, (assuming a fish could describe anything), a fish couldn't because it doesn't know what it would be like to be in something other than water. That's one of the virtues and the values of travelling across national borders and across cultural boundaries, that you begin to appreciate what you have and what you don't have by saying what others have and don't have. Particularly you begin to see what people take for granted, and that offers some of the clearest understandings of where their policies and values lie.

Some years ago in the space of four weeks I was in Sweden, then in Germany, then back home in the States. In Sweden we were talking about how a community shows it cares for children. And the Swedes were saying, "Here every 6 months a child has to be presented to a public clinic so there's some recognition that the child and family are doing well on a regular basis." And this is just taken for granted. And then I went to Germany and was talking about this with some friends, and they said, "Oh, we'd never accept anything like that, that would be too intrusive, too intrusive on privacy and the rights of the parents. "Of course", they said, "When you move, you have to register with the local police department and tell them that you've come and who's in your family and how old the children are, as a way that the society keeps track, but we would never think of doing what the Swedes do." Then I came home to the States and I was explaining what the Germans did, and my American friends said, "We would never do that: that's inconceivable. That would be too much of an intrusion upon the family, upon the rights of parents." I think one of the issues we have to focus on in an symposium like this is what is it that we take for granted; what seems impossible, what seems plausible, and what is taken for granted.

Bear in mind here that if we look historically, we are constantly confronted by the fact that things which were once inconceivable are now taken for granted. Think for example as I do in the States of smoking. When I began flying airplanes 35 years ago, it was inconceivable that there would be any limitation on smoking on airplanes. Smokers had rights, and one of those rights was to sit on an airplane and puff away, despite the fact that you were sitting next to them and might find that horrible. If you were to say then, "Imagine within 35 years smoking will be banned on most domestic flights, people would have laughed you out of the room. And now that's within sight, in the States, and it's happened in other places. So let's bear in mind that we can make changes. An important piece of making those changes is to build a kind of community consensus: to build a sense that things are taken for granted.

My topic today is how families relate to the community. And one of the big central themes is this question what we take for granted in that relationship. When I moved to Illinois five years ago, I brought to the state of Illinois a three year old daughter and a three year old car. And the state of Illinois said to me, "Garbarino, we care about cars. We want to know you brought that car to our state and we want it registered here. We want complete descriptive information. We want that car inspected every six months to know that it's in good operating condition. We want you to have insurance so that if some problems arise around that car, we know they're taken care of. We even want to have documentary evidence that you know how to operate that car. Illinois cares about cars." But I never heard a word about my three year old daughter. From the point of view of the community, from the point of view of the state, she was invisible. A non-entity. And the state would only express a concern about her under two kinds of circumstances. One, when she got to be 6 years of age, they want her in school. Two, if she had been born there, they would have wanted to register her birth at the time she was born. And of course if I really did terrible things to her, they would intervene in the form of child protective services. That, I think, is no way to run a community that is supportive of families. I lay that out early because that provides the foundations for my remarks.

At the same time it's true that changing families is not an easy process. And making social changes and knowing what effect they will have on families is not an easy process. A friend of mine is fond of remarking, "You can change the world, but unless you know what you're doing, please don't." Often there are unintended consequences of social changes that affect families. I think about in China as an example. When I visited a few years ago, I was appalled to find that in the course of trying to control population by putting into effect a one child policy, one of the unintended consequences was to stimulate a high level of homicide directed at female infants. The one child policy that said that families can only have one child went up against a deep family tradition favouring boys over girls. And so families, all kinds of families, were killing female children, rather than use up their quota, by expending it, by wasting it on a girl. Bear in mind that there are forces that work within families, some of them may even be biological, that drive families onward. The force to reproduce is certainly one of them. The force to give special investment in our own biological offspring is another. All of these forces are forces with which we have to contend as policy issues.

When I speak about families, I mean families in at least two of its historical senses. First, family in the sense of the Latin word **familia**, which means "household". I think our definition of families must come to terms with the fact that we're talking about residential units, at least in part. Secondly, "family" in the sense of social units designed to bear and rear children. And the intergenerational character of families is itself an important issue. I think we have to be very careful of simply allowing the term "family" to be appropriated and used by and for any desirable or positive social group. I think it's important to recognize that for children, family is not enough. There's more to a child's life than a child's family. And simply to refer to all the positive people in a child's life as a part of the child's family ignores this basic fact that children need adults outside their family. They need a "second opinion" on themselves, because we know that families develop traditions of belief, traditions of practice, and children need to see the world from another point of view as much as they need to see it from the particular point of view of their family.

We know that families are the key to the future, because any changes, social events, any social movements, will have to find their expression through families, will have to make to make peace with families, or if they can't do that, will have to make war on families. And that's certainly not something I think that we're engaged in here.

When I talk about families, I am talking about seven themes: themes that characterize strong families, healthy families, families that are well established in the social environment. Let me talk about those seven themes: themes that strong and effective families rely upon.

The first theme is stability. Families depend upon stability because first and foremost children are conservative, conservative with a small "c", perhaps, but children are conservative in the sense that they rely upon the stable arrangements in their lives to allow them to flourish. If you have young children, you know that they often want to hear the same book read to them over and over again. One reason is that they want to be reassured that the story comes out the same way, that they can find little pieces of the world that are regular, which operate in a regular way. Recently with my seven year old daughter, we had read through with her The Little House on the Prairies books, Laura Ingalls Wilder books, a delightful experience. We read through all six or seven of them, and my wife and I thought, "Well, that was very nice. We're glad we did that". But having finished the last book, her next request was to go back to Book 1, in part because she's still learning, that she can understand the world as a regular story, that the world is a dependable place.

A study conducted in Finland some years ago traced back from adolescence into early childhood, and asked: "What were some of the key elements in children who were doing well in adolescence?" and they found one thing that emerged very clearly was stability of childcare arrangements in early years. The point was that there were lots of different configurations, different ways to solve the child care problem. Lots of different arrangements are possible. It wasn't whether your mother cared for you, or your father cared for you, grandmother, or grandfather, or your babysitter. The point was that it was regular, that it was consistent, all with the context of there being someone who cared. And it's a disruption of those patterns that poses a threat, not any particular pattern in and about its own right. At the extreme we know that when societies begin to become unravelled, that families may be faced with so much instability that they can't even begin to continue to care for children.

In Brazil with a population of 130 or 140 million people there are thought to be some 7 or 8 million children who have been abandoned by their parents, because their families have become unravelled, because of the economic and social instability.

In the Soviet Union during the civil war they had in the 1920's, it was thought that some 5 to 7 million children were orphaned or turned loose because life became so unstable for their families. So family stability ought to be one of our goals to provide families the opportunity to have things be consistent and regular, particularly when children are young.

A second and related theme is that of security. Security: certainly one of the most important questions that children ask of us is: "Am I safe?" A recent survey of American parents asked, "What are your principal safety concerns for your children? What do you worry about?" And the single most common answer given by American parents was kidnapping. Well it's understandable. But empirically, kidnapping is a very minor threat in the lives of children, particularly kidnapping by strangers. In the whole United States, the FBI estimates there is something like 60 or 70 cases a year. There are of course many thousands of cases where children are kidnapped by non-custodial parents, but that's a different issue. In any case, parents worried about kidnapping. And then we went into a group of families living in a public housing project in Chicago and asked them the same question. These people live in high crime, drug-ridden, poverty environments. We asked them: "What are your principal safety concerns?" And every single one of these mothers said their first concern was shooting, that their child would be shot. And indeed by age 5 every single one of the children had had first hand encounters in shooting. They had seen someone shot, virtually all of them knew someone who had been shot, they lived in constant fear of being shot, and focused their lives around preventing that. The question "Am I safe" doesn't simply apply to children living in housing projects whose safety is at issue because of shooting, it's increasingly a question that more and more children ask outside the hotspots in our society, and I think in yours as well.

A study conducted in Toledo, Ohio a couple years ago asked 9 and 10 year old children, "What do you worry about?" And they found that children worry among other things about being kidnapped. But the really distressing thing was that 60 percent of the kids said that not only were they worried about being kidnapped, but 60 percent said it was likely that they would be kidnapped. And they got that message from being surrounded by milk cartons and posters and videos which constantly confront them by missing children, lost children, stolen children, and it's certainly reasonable to conclude, "How safe am I, if there's all these children who disappear?" In some environments in America at least, children have become so preoccupied with family breakup that they ask their parents, not "Are you getting divorced?" but "When are you getting divorced?" They've come to expect that divorce is a natural consequence of being in a family. That kind of insecurity is a basic threat to children, and it's a basic issue for families. And increasingly it's being recognized in the States as a national security issue.

Not long ago I participated in a two day session that involved John Sununu, President Bush's chief of staff, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the military, and the national security advisor. I was there to talk about child development. The point was that this was a national group recognizing that national security dependsupon the quality of the next generation, the next generation of workers, citizens, soldiers, and part of what we're about here as we think about family policy as a national security issue, in providing a sound foundation for the future.

A third theme that bears on that issue is the issue of time together. Raising children cannot be done in the abstract. Families can't function hypothetically. For families to work well for children, somebody has to be there for them. The distinction between quality and quantity time is often a false one. Quantity time is the precursor for quality time. I think that's even more true now than it was in generations past, because today's children in youth face more and more temptations than ever before. They face temptations of drugs, and sexually transmitted diseases. They have to perform at higher levels at school than kids ever did before. Bear in mind that it's only been 50 years ago that only a minority of kids graduated from high school. And now we expect that every kid will be able to do so. That ties into that question of time together because it means that we need families to provide evermore intensive socialization of children, evermore intensive working with children to build up the resistance to negative temptations.

A study conducted in Minnesota recently found that the most important determinant of whether or not 15 year olds were susceptible to negative peer influence was whether they felt a sense of adult supervision. Adult supervision is the other side of the coin of adult investment in time, the investment of being there with the child so that you can be with the child morally even when you aren't there physically later on. That's one reason why we have to be concerned about more and more children being turned loose at earlier and earlier ages, being told at age nine that you can care for yourself for three hours after school, five hours on a weekend. Because the child at nine who is turned loose in that way, at age 15 cannot be retrieved. You can't go back at age 15 and say, "Well now, I really want to be there to influence your behaviour", because the child quite rightly says, "Well, where were you six years ago? I've been running my own life for six years." And that kind of granting of premature independence is one of the big family issues. It ties more broadly into this question of time together. Research done in the 1950's in the United States on television found that when families were asked, "Why are you buying your first television?" the most frequent answer was, "To bring the family together." Of course it brought the family together physically, perhaps in the same room, but didn't provide the kind of intensive interaction among family members that we need. And of course with more and more families having two or more televisions, it's entirely possible that TV further fragments family life by separating families into more isolated units. Some of the early research asked mothers what the effect of having television was on them as parents in the early 1950's. And over and over again mothers said: "It's like putting the child to sleep." Initially they were delighted because it meant they could sit the child in front of the television and go about their business. I think one of the messages there is that some of what families need is not always what families will readily choose, because families can't always see the consequences of what they choose in the short run, and I think television viewing is one prime example.

Certainly one of these other issues about time is the fact that children recognize that the time invested in them is the most important thing their parents have to offer. In the 1920's a study was done in the United States in which kids were asked, "What's the most desirable thing about a mother and a father?" In the 1920's in a town in the United States, two thirds of the kids said the most desirable thing about a father is that he spends time with you. Even then, getting enough time from your father was a big issue. When the question was asked of mothers, only about 30 percent of the kids said, "A mother who spends time with you is the most desirable thing." Not because they didn't value the time they spent with their mother, but because they took it for granted, because they had virtually unlimited access to their mothers most of the time.

That study was repeated in the same town in the mid-1970's, and the same questions were asked. And in the mid-1970's when the same questions were asked, now 75% of the kids said the most desirable thing about a father is that he spends time with you. But now when the question was asked of mothers, two thirds of the kids said the most desirable thing about a mother is that she spends time with you.

Like most changes it has a two edged sword; there's good news and bad news. The good news is that mothers aren't being taken for granted the way they used to be. When I was growing up my mother used to refer to herself as "Old Slobbo", as in, "That's right, leave your clothes around. Old Slobbo will pick them up." The good news is that mothers are less likely to be treated and feel that way, because kids recognize now in growing numbers that access to your mother, the investment of time by your mother is something that really matters, because you can't take it for granted because there are lots of other things mothers can and are using their time for. The bad news is, we have to ask: "Is somebody taking up the slack, is somebody compensating for the fact that mothers are less directly available to their kids?" The natural person to be doing that is their fathers. But there is really little evidence that fathers have changed their roles substantially. There are few newsworthy cases, but by and large most fathers are not doing much more than they were.

So the question about time together becomes: "What is the net effect on kids, if families are re-orienting so that mothers are spending more and more time and energy in things outside the home?" And that of course is a major issue in the 80's and 90's and probably the decades to come. How will we as men and we as communities adapt to the changed role of women in families? Clearly we are making efforts, often heroic efforts, to adjust to those changes and certainly some men are leading the way to make those changes.

Recently I was on an airplane and the flight attendant noticed these friendship bracelets that I wear, given by my children. And she remarked that recently she had been with one of the pilots that she flew with at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and she said his wristwatch alarm went off at three in the afternoon. And she said, "What's that for?" And he said, "Well, you know, I have a son at home, and I'm constantly travelling so I'm away from home all the time, but it's a way of feeling together. We set our alarms for 3 o'clock in the afternoon and then the alarms go off and we think of each other." Now that's nice, but it's also pathetic. It's pathetic that we have to struggle so with such small gestures in order to have a sense of connection with our children.

Certainly one of the big issues we will have to face in the coming years is how to manage the time that kids need with their parents to do the job of growing up properly. A recent survey in the states asked kids, "Do you regularly have dinner with your parents?" And 70 percent of them said "no". Seventy percent of the kids said they did not regularly have dinner with parents because of the competing schedules of all the family members. Child rearing cannot be done in the abstract. It is not a hypothetical activity. Families must be together to work together.

That leads to what I consider the fourth theme, and that is the theme of belief and ideology. I think it's very important for kids and parents to have a sense of being a part of something larger than themselves, something larger than day-to-day life, something more than getting and spending. Here we're concerned about the spiritual and ideological foundations of family life. For some families it's religion. For others, it's politics. For others, it's humanitarianism. But the point is, families need to be able to offer to their children a sense of being part of something bigger than today, bigger than the material world, bigger than the next car, better than the next gadget. And there are so many pressures in modern life that undermine that sense.

A psychologist friend of mine, Helen Kivnick, talks about the infinite resources of the human spirit, and says that it's important for all of us to have a sense of what's important. How are children to learn an ethic of caring when all they see is disposable? How are they to have a sense of what it means to endure in relationships, communities, when they are constantly confronted with what we could call a "junky economy". "Junky" in two senses. "Junky" in the sense of an economy addicted to simple accumulation. Maybe you remember when Imelda Marcos was exposed for owning 2000 pairs of shoes and 500 black brassieres. Many of us thought this was kind of cute and excessive; others thought it was obscene, a grotesque waste, and it communicated an inappropriate sense of values. But of course, I think we have to ask ourselves, "How many pairs of shoes should a person have, when we only have two feet?" And what message are we giving to children about permanence and stability and enduring and taking care when we confront them and involve them in a constant turnover of plastic gadgetry. Some years ago when I was writing my book The Future as if it Really Mattered I tried to think of the most obscene, bizarre, caricatured example I could think about, and I thought, "What about Bic disposable phones? Make one call, then throw it away." I thought that was so ludicrous it would make my point clearly. By the time the book was out in print, I was reading about hospitals and hotels that have disposable phones. When you check out, they throw the phone away. Now it may seem like a small, irrelevant item, but I think it's a fundamental indicator of our attitude about the world. I think children are threatened by that attitude, because nothing is permanent, nothing is fixable, everything is disposable.

The fifth theme I think we have to recognize in talking about in a strong environment for families is access to basic resources. We know now pretty clearly that poverty is bad for children. It's bad for families. That's not to say that simply escalating affluence is good, but poverty we know is bad. We know from the problem of homelessness in the United States and other places, that it's fundamental for a child's sense of well-being that they have a sense of home. It doesn't have to be fancy, but they need a sense of place that they can belong to.

I was recently reading a study of dreams of children, particularly dreams of children living in war zones. This ties in with some work that I'm involved in studying Israeli and Palestinian children in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. And over and over again, one of the most chilling prospects for Palestinian children is the destruction of their home, which is something that takes place as a matter of policy in the current conflict. Being rooted in a place, a home, is critical for the development of children. It ties into the meaning of family as "household", which is one of its Latin origins. This means that one of the priorities for any policy that is family oriented is the ensuring of homes and the meeting of basic needs for families. And I think in many ways your society does better for this score than does my own.

And that of course leads to a sixth theme, which is the theme of community. I think we have to be very forthright in recognizing that parenthood is a social act. It is not a private act. Becoming a parent means entering a contract with the community, a contract that has mutual obligations and responsibilities. Alice Rossi, historian and family sociologist, has written a piece about the evolution of family parenting. And she says that if you think about it, the human species as a parent evolved in a particular kind of setting. It evolved this capacity to be a parent, it evolved in a situation of small and intimate groups, with a lot of sharing of child care responsibilities. And she says, "Therefore it's entirely possible that being a parent on your own, being an isolated parent without being part of this network, is alien to us. It's unnatural in an evolutionary way, that families rearing children were made to be part of the social network, part of a social fabric." One of the goals of our policy should be to play to that need, to accentuate that capacity, to respect and respond to it. And of course a community can show this kind of mutuality in many ways.

Recently I was travelling to Australia and was taking my son with me. When I went to get a visa, I presented our passports, and I said, "I would like a passport and visa for my son." They said, "Before we can give you that visa, we need a signed and authorized letter from his mother granting her permission for him to go. And at first I was taken aback because I hadn't encountered that before in my travels. And then I realized this was one small way a society can say, "We support families. That you as an individual parent are part of a unit, and you make choices as part of that unit." I think this is very important to us because in most modern societies, particularly the United States, we have seen a sort of social unravelling, an unknitting of the social fabric around families. And some of that has happened because of glorification of the individual, of the idea in liberating the individual from social bonds ought to be our first and foremost goal.

Increasingly, the United States is becoming a good place to live if you're a single affluent individual, or maybe two affluent individuals living together, but it's a harder and harder place to live in as a parent of a child. I think we find some resonance with this concern in a recent analysis by Martin Seligman. Seligman, you may recall, coined the term "learned helplessness". Seligman has looked at the data on depression among American adults, and finds that serious depression is now six to ten times more common than it was in the early decades of this century. He hypothesizes that the reason for this big increase of depression is two-fold. Partly it's because there have always been people who were vulnerable to being depressed, but society used to be so tightly knit together socially, that these people were held in place by the social ties and binds around them, that the intense social structures they were part of prevented them from sinking into depression. Now, he says, more of these people are allowed to sink into depression because the social demands are not there.

This reaches across our society in many ways. It includes, for example, that in schools, small schools make demands of people to participate actively. Big schools encourage passivity. The same individual in a small school will be drawn into activity, drawn into participation, induced to feel responsible.

The same individual in a big school will be superfluous, useless, a by-stander, and will sink in to negative or anti-social behaviour. The same thing is probably true of families, that small intimate communities can make demands of families that buoy them up or hold them in place. This is what Seligman recognizes in his data on depression. The second thing he points to is this notion of the individual isolated self. That identity comes from who you are individually, rather than what you're a part of and who you're connected with. These are two very different ideas of identity.

Some cultures strive to produce a sense of connectedness in identity, others strive for individualization. A teacher reports on two Hawaiian children who brought home report cards, two sisters. One had A's on her report cards, the other had C's. The parents punished one of the sisters, the one with A's, because they said, "If you're so smart, why didn't you help your sister get B's?" That kind of thinking is very foreign to most of us and that may be to our detriment. If you give a test to a group of Hawaiian children, the first thing they begin doing is looking at each other's papers. Are they cheating or are they cooperating? Our societies in North America have a kind of time bomb of individualist, autonomist, private aspirations, which run counter to many of the needs of families which are based on collective mutuality, sharing, cooperation, and I think in many of these issues if you want to see the dangerous road that you could go down, look south of the border.

A seventh theme I think we need to recognize is what might be called justice. In the United States we have found that domestic violence, let's call it what it most often is: violence by men against their wives and children, domestic violence decreases as family egalitarianism increases. The more equal, the more empowered are women in families, the more there is a sense of justice in families, thus less violence there is in families. And that's probably true even more generally around families. Vicious societies place fierce demands on families. Vicious societies produce vicious family life. Both Sweden and Austria have now outlawed the use of assault against children. And simply looking at that issue is a way of getting an indicator of where things are in our own societies. In Sweden in the 19th century, it was considered legal for a man to beat his farm animals, his wife, and his children. Sometime in the late 19th century they made it illegal to beat your farm animals. And then in the 1920's they made it illegal to beat your wife. And finally in the 1970's they made it illegal to beat your child. That kind of chronicle is one we're still enmeshed in. So long as we legitimatize the use of assault against children and others inside families, as long as we stand back from justice within families, we won't have peace within families. There's a bumper sticker on a car in the parking lot near my office that says, "If you want peace, work for justice". I think it's a message that is applied to families as well as to political discussions. Now that's the kind of agenda I think families need to deal with.

Let me briefly put my finger on what I think are some of the forces that threaten families. Of course there is the threat of violence. In the United States, we call it an "addiction to violence", and it's based on the recognition that every act of violence, no matter how it's intended, has the effect of increasing the likelihood of violence somewhere down the line. The United States is truly addicted to violence. There's the threat of autonomy and privacy over the mutuality and interdependence as mentioned before.

I think most of our attention can usefully be focused on the relation of families to the economy. Here I think there are two concepts we have to particularly identify. One of these is what economists might call opportunity cost. An opportunity cost arises when one is faced with a choice. One choice produces cash income, the other has other kinds of rewards. To choose the latter imposes an opportunity cost. To make it concrete, suppose your supervisor comes to you and asks you to work Thursday tonight, and for that I'll pay you fifty dollars. But then your son or daughter comes to you and says, "Well, I'm going to be in the school play Thursday night, come and watch". Now, to go to your child's play involves your paying the opportunity cost of fifty dollars. The concern is that as more and more day to day life becomes dominated by opportunity cost, there's a gradual eroding of the family investment in togetherness and in children. Because inevitably you start thinking, "Well, son or daughter, do you have a leading role in this play? I mean if you had the lead part, maybe it would be worth fifty dollars, but a walk on is only about two-fifty." And you begin thinking about child care. You don't simply ask, "What's best for the child?" You begin to ask, "What can we afford? What can we get away with?" Because it's a big opportunity cost to be there for children. There's some suggestion that in the United States that Americans' idea of what age a child can take care of himself after school has dropped in the last 15 years. The same middle class families who 15 to 20 years ago would say you would have to be 11 before you can take care of yourselves, would now say you can do it at eight or nine. And that's tied up with this economic movement.

The Swiss economist Orio Giorini has talked about the importance of looking at the monetarized and the non-monetarized economy. The recognition that goods and services change hands in the non-monetarized economy all the time. For example, where does most of the preventive health care for children take place? In the non-monetarized economy. When people get their kids to wash their hands before they eat, when they make them go to bed early if they're coming down with a cold. When they feed them chicken soup if they have a cough. Where does most child care take place? Most of it still takes place in the non-monetarized economy. But we have seen a very clear movement of child care from the non-monetarized into the monetarized economy. And now it shows up in the gross national product. Now we say, "How can we afford child care?" How did we ever afford child care? We afforded it because it was subsidized by families in the non-monetarized economy. Women subordinated their careers or their outside interests to provide child care. Men generated income and subsidized that process financially. We don't have more child care than we used to. In a sense we may even have less, but it shows up as a bigger factor in the economy. It's not unlike when you were growing up in a small town you could swim in the local river. That takes place in the non-monetarized economy. But now suppose that river becomes so polluted that you have to build a swimming pool. That's good news for the economy. It doesn't change the fact that you're a child swimming. But now because it's in the monetarized economy, it gets counted. It's important. Mothers have always worked. What's changed is that mothers are now working both at home and in the cash economy. The conventional way of thinking says, "That's terrific. Look at the increase in economic activity." At what cost to families? These opportunity costs are something we have to wrestle with. We have to help families make those choices in wise ways, and we have to make those choices as easy as possible for them, but we also have to recognize another set of economic concepts, what we might call externalized and internalized costs.

The internalized costs of doing business are those costs that you have to pay for as part of your business activity. The externalized costs are those you get others to pay for. Again the cost of physical pollution is an easy example. If I'm running a company and I can get away with dumping my waste product into the river, and let the city pay for cleaning the river up, that's good business for me, because I externalized that cost. One of the key issues in the upcoming decades will be our political ability to make businesses and other enterprises internalize all the costs of doing business. Recently in Chicago, there was proposed legislation that would require builders when they built a new office building in the city, to set aside a certain amount of space for a day care centre in the building. The idea was that if you build a building like that, you're going to employ lots of parents, and one of the costs of business is helping out with the child care. A hundred years ago we had issues that were directly analogous. If I ran a coal mine and people got black lung disease from working in my coal mine, I would say, "Hey, that's not my problem. They choose to work here, they should work out that problem." But eventually we came to see that, "No, one of the costs of running a mine is that you have some responsibility for the physical health of your workers. The issue now is, are businesses and other agencies that employ people, able to internalize the cost to families that comes from running that business. Businesses everywhere depend upon mothers to work in them. Part of the obligation ought to be to help deal with the child care needs of those families. I think more and more we're going to see this issue of internalized and externalized cost be fought out in legislatures.

Maybe you've been reading some of the work about the impact of electric power lines on childhood cancer. And if you have, you might have heard that there's some growing recognition that living near electric power lines may be responsible for 10 to 15 percent of all childhood cancer. Who should bear the cost of that? Families, whose children get cancer? Governments that underride health costs? Or the power companies that run the lines through? There was a thing in the Globe and Mail yesterday saying that some actuarial group has estimated that by the year 2000 the cost to each family in Canada of dealing with pollution will $1400. That's just averaged out over everybody. Whose responsibility is that? Do we share that responsibility equally? The big political challenge will be to get all institutions to internalize the family cost of their operations: business, governments, and private enterprises of other types, churches, educational institutions, and so on.

If we're going to struggle with these family issues, I think we have to address all of those seven themes. We particularly have to address these economic themes to understand our economy better. We have to understand that the key political issue is going be requiring that enterprise internalize all their cost. We're going to have to involve kids in economic activities that generate a sense of caring. Projects for recycling, materials conservation, and growing gardens in your home and community; all of these activities will be seen as family-building as well as ecologically sensible. We will need to listen to what Carol Gilligan calls "the feminine voice": the voice that builds towards knitting together communities, that builds towards solving social problems, through negotiation and caring rather than the assertion of rights and power. We're going to have to learn to teach ecology as one of our primary curricula in the school. We're going to have to learn to teach our parents the law of ecology which is, "You can never do just one thing. Everything is connected. The way children see impermanence in the material world will affect the way they see permanence in the spiritual and the world of relationships within their families." I think this theme of seeing connection among the living beings of the world and into the future will come to dominate our discussions of families.

DR. JAMES GARBARINO

Let me close with a statement made by Erik Erikson, in his old age of 88, he's thinking about life, and this is what he has to say: "The only thing that can save us as a species, is seeing how we're not thinking about future generations and the way we live. What's lacking is generativity, a generativity that will generate positive values in the lives of the next generation. Unfortunately, we set the example of greed: wanting a bigger and better everything, with no thought of what will be better for our great-grandchildren. That's why we go on depleting the earth. We're not thinking of the next generation. Where, but in families, do we teach these lessons about the next generations?"

PLENARY PRESENTATION OF ROY BONISTEEL

Roy Bonisteel former host of CBC's Man Alive began his career with newspapers in Belleville and Trenton, Ontario. He switched to radio during the 1950's, and became director of broadcasting for the United Church of Canada in 1965. He has headed radio operations for several churches and has been host of Man Alive for 20 seasons. Mr. Bonisteel has won many broadcasting honours. He is the author of two best-selling books: In Search of Man Alive and Man Alive: The Human Journey.

PRESENTATION:

I have never thought of myself as an expert on the family. Certainly I have no miracle solution to what is described by sociologists today as the new family life crisis. There could not possibly be a standard recipe for family health or even family survival, but it is universally accepted that the family unit is essential for the health and welfare of children and nations and deserves all our attempts to protect and preserve it.

The close-knit, island-like notion of a family came into being only comparatively recently--in fact, in the last century--and was the result of the uprooting and destruction of nearly all other kinds of stable communities. Village life was broken up by the new industries. Peasant cultures dwindled. People moved to the big cities--or to the new world--in search of work. The community support which was actually a larger family atmosphere disintegrated. The basic family unit was born with parents and children clinging to each other for survival.

When times became easier--when big organizations and the law itself began to protect the weak, when wages were higher and job opportunities better and more varied, when there were schools and colleges to help children along in life--then the closeness and self-sufficiency of the island-type family was no longer needed for economic and social reasons. By this time, this family ideal had acquired such a huge symbolic importance in our national way of life that it had to be preserved. The whole cultural identity of the West was bound up with it. The weakened economic pressure to preserve the close and self-sufficient family was replaced by the emotional and moral pressure. It was one's duty to put family loyalty before all others. Not to do so was counted unnatural and wicked, no matter how some family members behaved. Inevitably, this effort to cement the family together with purely emotional and moral adhesives involved a great deal of hypocrisy and eventually, of course, people rebelled against it. Divorces today are common; single-parent families abound; the adhesive isn't working.

What is left is the desire to experience the joy, the love the caring that is possible in family life. There are families which have strong bonds of loyalty and affection without that "hot house" feeling that suffocates some relationships.

There are families that stay together without being possessive or dependent--families that launch their children with confidence into a challenging and even risky world without the fear of losing the bonds with home.

What is it that makes the difference? Are the parents selfish? Not necessarily. It seems to me that good, sound families must be worked at, just as the individual relationships within the family must be worked at.

Only a couple generations ago, parents could not afford to place too much emotional involvement with any one infant; too many children died at birth or in the first four years of life. Today, far more pregnancies are successful and nearly all children live. As parents have fewer children, they invest more attachment in each. Their hopes have narrower channels. We expect each child to be a precious, unique person. Our expectations are higher. And, consequently, we are more disappointed when they miss the mark. As a young person, starting out in life, it would have been very difficult for me to miss my parents mark--because there wasn't any. Their expectations of me had nothing to do with occupation, or achievement or positions. Their expectations of me and my brothers and sisters had to do with more homely qualities--honesty, civility, manners, respect for others, compassion, fidelity.

I suggest that when we look at successful family life from these directions, we do indeed find the family in trouble. Today we cannot count on these qualities being promoted within the family, or even being given primary importance in society.

A little over a year ago, the Earth's population reached the five-billion mark. According to the United Nations, we'll be able to add another billion to that in the next decade.

We talk a lot about how technology and mass communication is changing our world at an unheard--of pace. But surely nothing is effecting greater change on a global scale that the pressure of a burgeoning human population.

This year we can expect the world population to increase by more than 80 million. But what does that mean?

Well, for Africa, where the rate of population to increase--at three per cent--is the highest in the world, it means another 18 million people.

For South Asia it means another 33 million people. It means another 15 million in East Asia (not counting Japan) and another nine million in Latin America.

Of that 80 million-plus increase, all the world's developed countries will account for just seven million. The imbalance is so great--our own society so insulated from the effects of this tremendous evolution--that we have to stop and think to remind ourselves just what kind of world lies beyond our borders.

War. Famine. Disease. So why do we have to worry about it anyway? First of all, the escalation of the world's ills is at such a rapid pace that they simply won't remain beyond our border. Secondly, the problems are so great that we cannot, morally, ignore them. During the hours of this conference today, 360 children under the age of five--enough to fill a jumbo jet--will die in Angola and Mozambique because of guerilla wars there.

Can we ignore that just because it's happening on the other side of the planet? How can we not think of those 360 African children as individuals, as we do our own? Perhaps they will die today because we do find it so hard to care.

Oh, it can't be our fault. Can it be our fault that the People's Republics of Angola and Mozambique spend 20 to 30 per cent of their government budgets on their armies while hundreds have died from war-related famine?

Can it be our fault that the Soviet Union, East Germany and Cuba are helping to prop us one side of the guerilla wars while South Africa and the U.S. are helping to fuel the other?

Once, when Mother Teresa visited Canada, she told me: "The world is suffering much because of a terrible disease. Not leprosy, not tuberculosis, not even hunger--but from not being loved or wanted."

Sociologists say we're living in a society full of selfish people. We are shut up into our own inner space. A time when everyone is consumed with one solitary notion--let's talk about me. An era dedicated to the cultivation of self. The great turning inward that is our society. It's our new morality. And the greatest single feature of our new morality today is this degree of selfishness.

The prime bit of evidence I offer is your local book store. It is bursting with best-selling copies of "getting-ahead-by-intimidating-thy-neighbour" self-help books. they promise power, they guarantee success, and they tell us to look out for number one. They tell us it's okay to be dishonest and selfish and scheming--just don't get caught at it. "How to Be Your Own Best Friend" is a current topseller, so is 'Winning Through Intimidation', 'Looking Out For Number 1".

Their philosophy is that, years from now, it won't matter much anyway, life to these authors is a zero sum game. It has all the significance of fighting over the biggest piece of candy. It's the fight of the solitary ego against other solitary egos. D. Keith Marrow described it. He says, "People are being told today to become psychological jocks, out to get a black belt in nasty."

Part of the reason for this, I suppose, is our reaction to the 60's and the 70's, which were characterized by a lot of youthful idealism. Perhaps we've now become hardened cynics.

The signs of turning inward are all around us--the best-seller lists, the self-realization therapists, the religious snake oil peddlers.

Our consumer society reflects a catering to "me". I'll buy now what I want at any expense to fulfil my desires right now, because I'm being told on all sides that it is not only right but good to indulge and to pamper and to satisfy myself. Our natural resources are being rapidly depleted because we care about me, her and now, not tomorrow, or the next generation, or not even about others who are sharing this planet with us. And not caring about others seems to be the mark of this generation.

How do we arrive at a more caring society? How do we teach children to become compassionate individuals sensitive to the world beyond their own borders? Well it's not something school-board experts can boil down and package as an "instructional unit" for social studies class. Compassion isn't something you can deliver through ministry of education guidelines, a couple of posters and some hand puppets.

You teach children to act compassionately by treating them with compassion. You teach children to care about their fellow man by showing you care about them, and you teach them how to love by showing them love.

Encouraging our children to become caring individuals, then, isn't just some add-on component for classroom eduction--like those programs to discourage smoking or encourage dental hygiene--and it's not an optional technique for family counsellors: It should be the central theme of our entire education system and social service programs.

Who needs more captains of industry without compassion for their workers? Who needs scientists with no sense of responsibility for their creations? Who needs military strategists who can't see that their ware are letting thousands starve?

And this is an attitude that must prevail in our homes as well as in our schools and community service programs. But parents are going to need some help.

Circumstances no longer throw the family together. The structures of Canadian life are centrifugal--driving families apart--and we must realize that the means to health lie with the family itself. Parents must give thought to what family life will mean to them. Family life will not just happen. It must be designed, chosen and worked at. The family must seize responsibilities back from government, from industry, from schools, from society at large. The family must reclaim its own functions.

No other agency on the planet can teach human beings to be intelligent, honest, generous and moral as efficiently and as the family.

We talk a lot about creating a more caring society, yet society offers economic rewards for selfishness. We want our bureaucracies to treat people as individuals, yet a bureaucracy has a way of homogenizing everything that lies in its path. We say that we're encouraging the handicapped to fulfil-their own potential, but deep down we may be disappointed when they don't meet our goals.

ROY BONISTEEL

Perhaps we talk so much about caring today because we perceive there is so little of it going on. Real caring, I mean: Our televisions tell us that nobody really cares for you like your automobile manufacturer: that you're in good hands with Allstate; that receiving a Hallmark card means someone cared enough to send the very best ... It seems everybody cares when they want to sell you something.

Talk about caring and you come up with contradictions: I think that we want to believe--and sometimes desperately so--that someone cares for us, and yet we are suspicious of people who say that they do; we talk about the joys of "getting in touch" with others, but we really don't want to get too close; we say society has an obligation to care for the needy, but we often balk at the costs.

When I was a boy growing up in rural Ontario during the 1930's, people in my family...our friends and relatives...didn't talk about caring.

We didn't gather in the parlour for group sensitivity sessions. We rarely said that we loved each other. And yet, we never had reason to doubt that we were cared for.

But it would be hard to say that society, as a whole, was more caring.

At a time when Canadian governments were only just beginning to get into the business of human health and social services, society could be pretty brutal for those who couldn't manage on their own. From that perspective, looking at the amount of money governments spend on health care, social and welfare services today, it would seem as though we do indeed live in a caring society.

With this perspective of modern health and social services--and with virtually no real growth in funding for such services over the past decade--it's not surprising that we are trying to recapture some of the personal flavor of the community...some of the caring provided by that "family" we've spent so much to replace.

Through decentralization of services, deinstitutionalization of people and a professed desire to treat clients as individuals, we've invested a great deal of effort toward this goal, but, hobbled with the ideals and often selfish concerns of this era, progress has been slow.

In some cases, decentralization has been used by politicians as an opportunity to shift the funding burden from one level of government to another.

In the face of deinstitutionalization, we've come up short on housing facilities in the community. In Ontario, it seems, you can count on your fingers the number of group homes that have been established without battles with local landowners--neighbours who are generally more concerned about property values than ushering in a caring society.

Once we believed that the technological society, the advancements in electronic communications, would bring the whole world together as a family. The "global village." Instead, technology--as we practice it---seems to be promoting more alienation than togetherness.

We get caught up in this whole technological society, and we expect things to be perfect and we expect people to be perfect... and we're disappointed when they're not.

We hear about computers for the home that will spew out the news, do your grocery shopping, get dinner and, quite likely, change the baby. We hear about robots that will do most of our work and replace our fellow human beings as partners and associates.

The reason why things are enjoying such good press these days is because they are becoming perfect.

Scientists talk of building "fool-proof" technology. What they really mean is a technology free of fools. And the fools in this case happen to be human beings.

You can depend on machines. You can't always depend on human beings. They are too fallible, too unreliable.

In the world of sterile flawlessness, I can't help but give three cheers for imperfection. Being imperfect means being human. Today, it is very important that we remain imperfect.

"The Perfect Man"

I think that when we begin to expect perfection, we end up treating each other as something other that human begins. This has a lot to do with the society in which we live. We have come to put other values ahead of caring for each other.

We've got to question our own values before we judge others. We can't weigh achievement on the scales of an ethically schizophrenic society.

If the hallmarks of modern society are alienation, withdrawal, anxiety and depression...to name but a few, then our mental state may have a great deal to do with how we view the future and how we take care of others. Society's approach to family services, than, is governed by the cultural priorities and the structures that embody these priorities.

As an illustration, one can say that Canadian business, or economic life, is structured around and dominated by a single value--and that is to make money. The GNP---the gross national product--is the index of economic health. The BMW is the sign of social status. Very often our boards of trustees are made of men of money. And you may have noticed that banks have now replaced cathedrals as our tallest buildings.

Now, our culture rewards this value in many subtle and non-subtle ways. And this means that other values, other concerns, will be pursued only within this overall priority.

So, if concern for our neighbour, or concern for the environment---for education, for health care. for the future or the next generation--if this concern is lacking it's because it's not a priority.

And it's not a priority because it's not seen a profitable. And so social services are promoted within the dominance of an overriding concern--"If we can afford it."

"If we can afford it" means: "If we can achieve it without disturbing our lifestyle...If it doesn't bother us...If it's convenient for us.

As government fiscal restraint puts the squeeze on family services, the snowballing bureaucracy of the social services industry is reducing the effectiveness of whatever funds are available. Inextricably linked with government through the never-ending quest for grants and subsidies, even the so-called private agencies are mirroring the paralysing indecisiveness of our politicians.

Community-based service agencies are becoming paperwork junkies. While funds for the services that actually reach PEOPLE appear to be shrinking in terms of real dollars, were're finding that governments take kindly to funding studies--or, better yet: How about a preliminary study to see if additional funds should be allotted for a full-blown needs survey...something that may serve as a prelude to a feasibility report.

Knowing that they can't get money to hire enough staff, rent adequate facilities or buy needed equipment, these agencies start playing the paperwork game. It often looks something like this:

> The federal government's spring make-work program gets you a researcher, a part-time secretary, some telephone and rent expenses and a leased photocopier while they work on the drop-in centre feasibility study. A pilot community job-bank program for the handicapped gets provincial government money for two college students and enough paper to produce a newsletter on the federally-funded photocopier. Then there's the joint federal-provincial funds through which the agency can have its dilapidated offices renovated by hard-to-employ ex-convicts--but the money's been held up while the two levels of government try to coordinate a joint press release announcing the funding.
>
> Come fall, of course, the funds dry up just as the grant comes in that allows you to keep the administrator on for another winter. Her talk (just as it was last year): to determine the feasibility of moving the agency towards self-sufficiency.
>
> Meanwhile, the politicians gleefully announce the number of new jobs they've created, the number of new studies they've launched, apparently oblivious to the fact that, instead of addressing the problems of the community, they've only tangled another agency in their perverted funding system.

My fear is that, as we become more deeply entrenched in this kind of bureaucracy, those on the front lines of the system may begin to accept such political wheel-spinning as appropriate.

It seems to me that compassion is the key to providing the kind of services that will strengthen the family in Canada. It'll take compassion to understand the problems of our fellow man--to provide the kinds of programs needed to address those problems. It'll take a truly caring society.

Dr. Stevan Gala sums it up this way: "Rationality, interpersonal communication and the ability to love and be loved are some of the essential attributes of human life." And that's what we have to keep our eyes open for.

For our disadvantaged, our troubled, the squeeze is on because these people aren't productive. These people are sort of in the way. After all, we have a right to lead our lives without all this responsibility--and why should our wards and welfare rolls be cluttered up with people who are such a burden.

ROY BONISTEEL

It seems to me that being human involves being a burden. I think that's why we're here--to be burdens on each other. It's a joy to carry somebody. And it's a joy that you're denying them if you don't let them carry you.

I'm reminded of a great communicator named Paul who lived many years ago. He used to write letters to a lot of people. He wrote one to some people who lived in a place called Corinth. He talked a lot about changing cymbals, tinkling bells, moving mountains and looking through a glass darkly.

If he had been living today, instead of 2,000 years ago, I like to think he might have written it like this:

> Though I speak with the tongues of Gilbran and Fromm, and have not love, I'm as useless as the roar of a snowmobile and as boring as a TV rerun. Though I have the gift of education and academic achievement, and understand all textbook mysteries, so that I can move mountains of paperwork, and have not love, it profits no one. And though I give my money to the United Appeal, and I give up my body to the university...or to Weight Watchers...and have not love, it is useless.
>
> Love suffers, yet is kind. Love is despised, yet remains. It bears all things, it believes all things, it hopes all things, it endures all things--because love never fails.
>
> And whether these be the prophecies of Malcolm Muggeridge, they shall fail. Whether they be the tongues of Billy Graham, they shall fail. And whether this be the advice of Ann Landers, it too shall pass away.
>
> For we know only in part. When I was a child in my profession, I spoke as an expert, I behaved as an expert and I thought I was an expert. But when I become an expert, I will put away these childish things. For now I see through a glass dark with my own hang-ups. But in time I shall know myself as I myself am known.
>
> And now abide these three: Faith in my ability as a communicator to touch hearts as well as minds; hope, for the discovery of the essential goodness in all people; and love--love for a fellow human being.
>
> And the greatest of these is love.

PANEL PRESENTATION OF
EVELYN LAPIERRE-ADAMCYK
Canada's Families Today

Evelyn Lapierre-Adamcyk Director, Research Group on Quebec Demography; Professor of Demography, University of Montreal; one of three principal investigators in the Canadian Fertility Study.

PRESENTATION:

THE CANADIAN SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT IN THE 1980s

Major demographic changes have taken place in Canada since 1960. These changes have undoubtedly had a significant impact on the socio-economic environment of families and individuals, and on the resulting lifestyles and ways of thinking.

The purpose of this presentation is to illustrate, through the use of graphs, the most important characteristics of these new demographic trends. Chronologically, the changes have affected the mortality, fertility, divorce and marriage rates, and have significantly altered the age composition of the population, as well as the structure and nature of Canadian families:

Let us examine these phenomena individually.

Death, a phenomenon that now rarely affects youth and occurs later among women

Life expectancy at birth has increased from approximately 60 years for both sexes in 1931 to 72 years for males and 79 years for females in 1983-85 (Graph 1). This gain in life expectancy can be attributed to a sharp decline in infant mortality and a significant increase in the mean length of life, with the result that in a given generation, less than 10% of males and less than 5% of females die before the age of fifty, and only at age seventy-five for males and eighty-two for females has half their generation passed away. The only cloud on the horizon is the accidental death rate for young men, which is still too high.

Changes in the mortality rate have also been characterized by an excess of male deaths over female deaths. This phenomenon has resulted in a dramatic increase in the proportion of older women; until the age of 70, the proportion of males to females is almost identical (Graph 2), but beyond this age, the proportion of females increases to 60% and over very rapidly. This tendency has become more noticeable over the years and is often associated with difficult social circumstances for older women who live alone and who, as part of a generation that did not participate in economic activity as it is traditionally defined, have only limited resources.

The appeal of the small family

Of the demographic changes that have taken place, the decline in family size is, unquestionably, the most widely recognized, and the factor that has undoubtedly most significantly changed the lives of people in general, and women in particular.

Although this changes was clearly evident during the 1980s, it had already begun long before: throughout the twentieth century, the number of large families declined steadily. Even during the 1940s, married couples had an average of only just over three children; barely over one-third had four or more children (Graph 3). However, only 18% of couples married during the 1960s had four or more children; most families had two or three.

During the following decade small families became the norm; 50% of families had two children, less than 10% had four or more. There was little change in the number of childless families. The aspirations of young people in the 1980s are quite similar to those of couples in the 1970s; however, because they are putting off having children, the proportion of childless couples could increase.

Transformation of the family unit

Two sociodemographic factors are associated with the decline in family size, neither of which are direct causes or consequences of the decreasing fertility rate. Unstable marriages and an increase in the number of common-law unions have changed the framework within which couples unite and form families.

Divorce statistics indicate that if the trends of the 1980s continue, over one in three marriages will end in divorce. Moreover, legal marriage as the type of first union has undergone a marked decline (Graph 4). Almost non-existent among those born prior to 1950, common-law unions were the choice of 50% of Canadians born between 1959 and 1963. By definition, common-law unions are more precarious and are therefore regarded as being more unstable. Indeed, nearly 50% of common-law unions end after eight years, compared with approximately 15% of marriages (Graph 5); it is also known that couples who live together before getting married have more unstable unions than those who get married without first living together.

As mentioned earlier, the fact that unions are more precarious results in couples delaying the decision to have children; moreover, the instability of the couples, regardless of whether they have children or are legally married, has brought about an increase in new family structures such as lone-parent families and blended families (Table 1). Both may be transition stages during which adults are reorganizing their personal lives. This means that the children of these families must go through adjustment periods which may or may not be easy for them. We know that an increasing number of children are affected by such changes. More than 20% of children born in the early 1970s will, by their tenth birthday, have experienced the separation of their parents (or will have been born to single mothers), compared to 12% for those born around 1961-63. Moreover, of the 21% who have already lived with a single mother, more than half (13.4%) will have seen their mother form another union; one in five (4.5%) will have been part of a lone-parent family a second time, and one in ten (2.9%) will have been part of a second blended family. (Graphs 6 and 7, Marcil-Gratton, 1988). This development, whose effect on the lives of children is not well known, raises numerous questions for adults.

Effects on age composition, and population growth

We have just examined how these demographic phenomena affect the lives of individuals; they also affect the population as a whole. One of the more immediate effects of the declining fertility rate was the change in the age composition of the population. Canada's population, once young and rapidly growing, is aging and increasing more slowly.

To this day, experts seem unable to resolve the debate surrounding the issue of population growth. The question to be answered is the following: is near-zero population growth (Graph 8) an ideal solution for maintaining or improving the standard of living? Are the social and economic changes needed to ensure a fair distribution of wealth more difficult or easier to implement when the proportion of young people is smaller or when the proportion of older people is relatively large? Is the work force more productive when there is a balance between older workers and young workers?

The low fertility rate has also changed the relationship between factors ensuring population growth. If the fertility rate stays at around 1.6 children, natural growth - the excess of births over deaths - will be around zero by the beginning of the next century - a little later if the fertility rate stabilizes at 1.8 (Graph 9).

Table 1

Distribution of census families by type of family, and the change in the proportion of each type between 1981 and 1986, Canada

Census families	1981	1986	Increase (%) in total number, compared with 1981
Total	100	100	5
With children			
- married couples	55	52	1
- common-law couples	2	3	50
- lone-parent - females	9	10	19
- lone-parent - males	2	2	22
Without children			
- married couples	28	28	7
- common-law couples	4	5	29

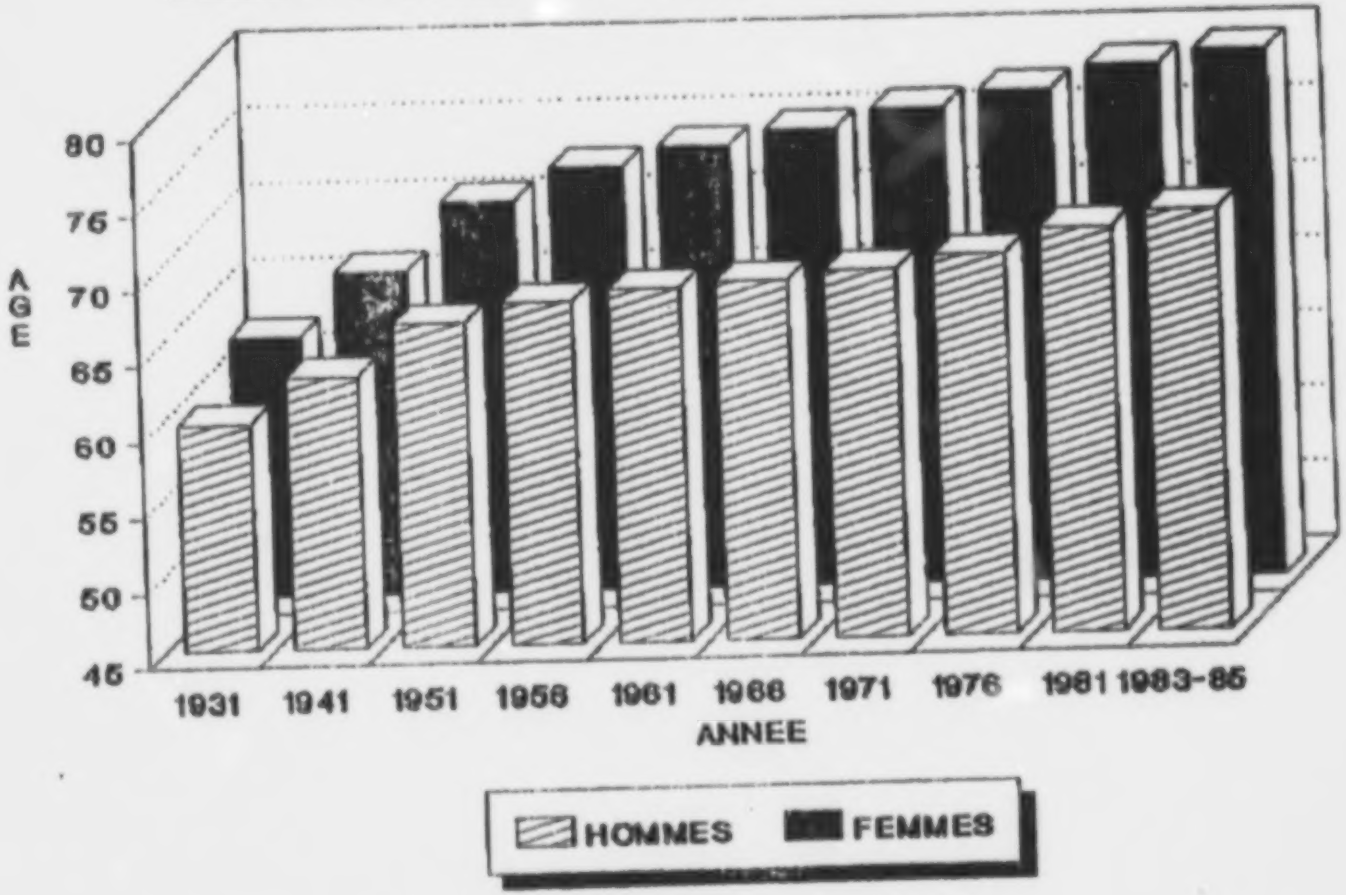
Source: Calculations based on Statistics Canada 1986 Census of Canada, Catalogue 93-106, Table 3

At the same time, migratory movements contribute to a more or less rapid net growth, depending on several factors influencing government policies and people's decisions to come to Canada or to leave the country. The effect that these movements will have on the growth of the Canadian population has become one of the most important questions in terms of the development of a just, generous and prosperous society.

Graphique 1

ESPERANCE DE VIE A LA NAISSANCE
Canada, 1931-1985

Life Expectancy at Birth 1931-1985

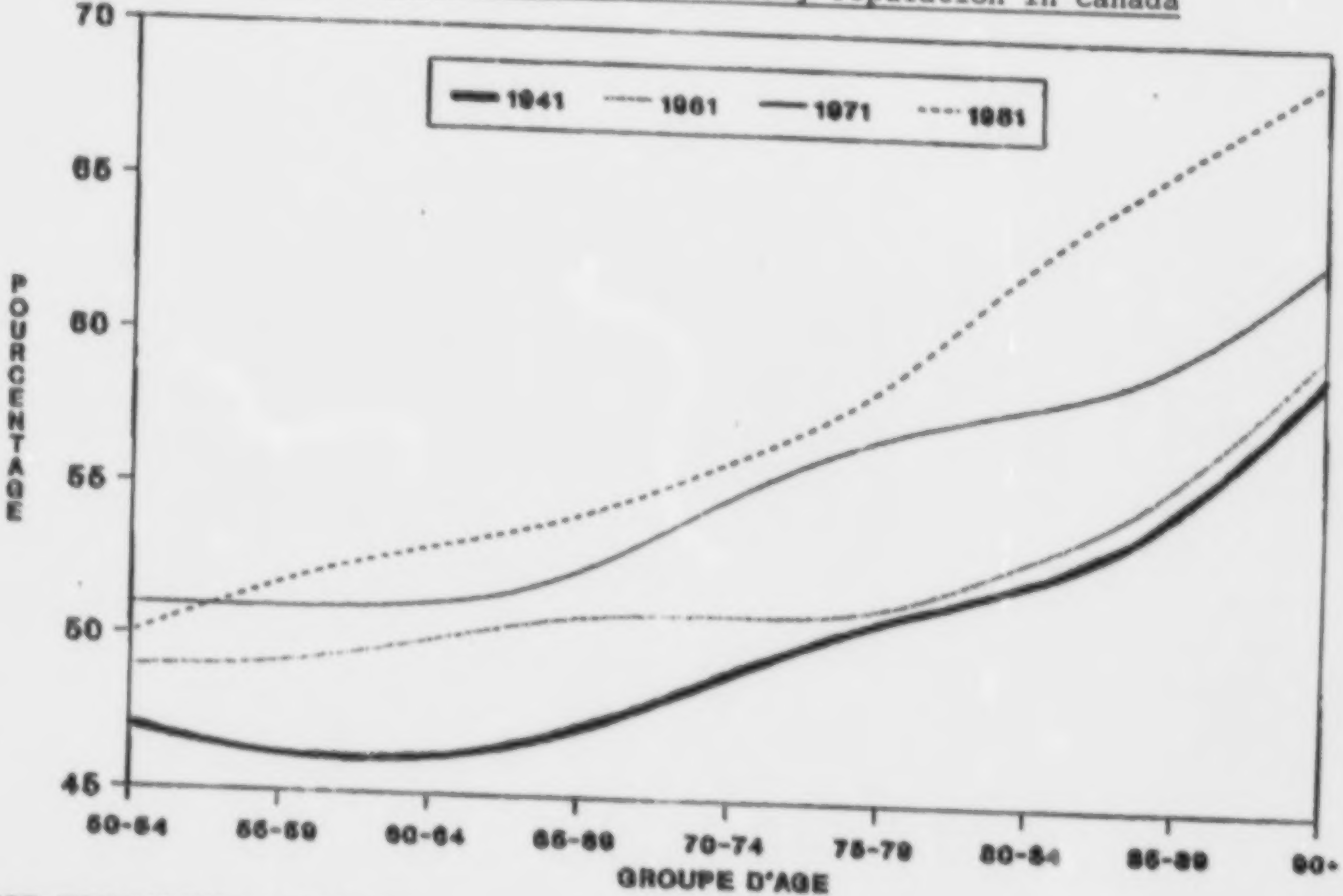


SOURCE: Annuaire du Canada, 1988, p.3-21

Graphique 2

PROPORTION DE FEMMES PARMI LES PLUS DE 50 ANS, CANADA

Proportion of Women Among the Over-fifty Population in Canada



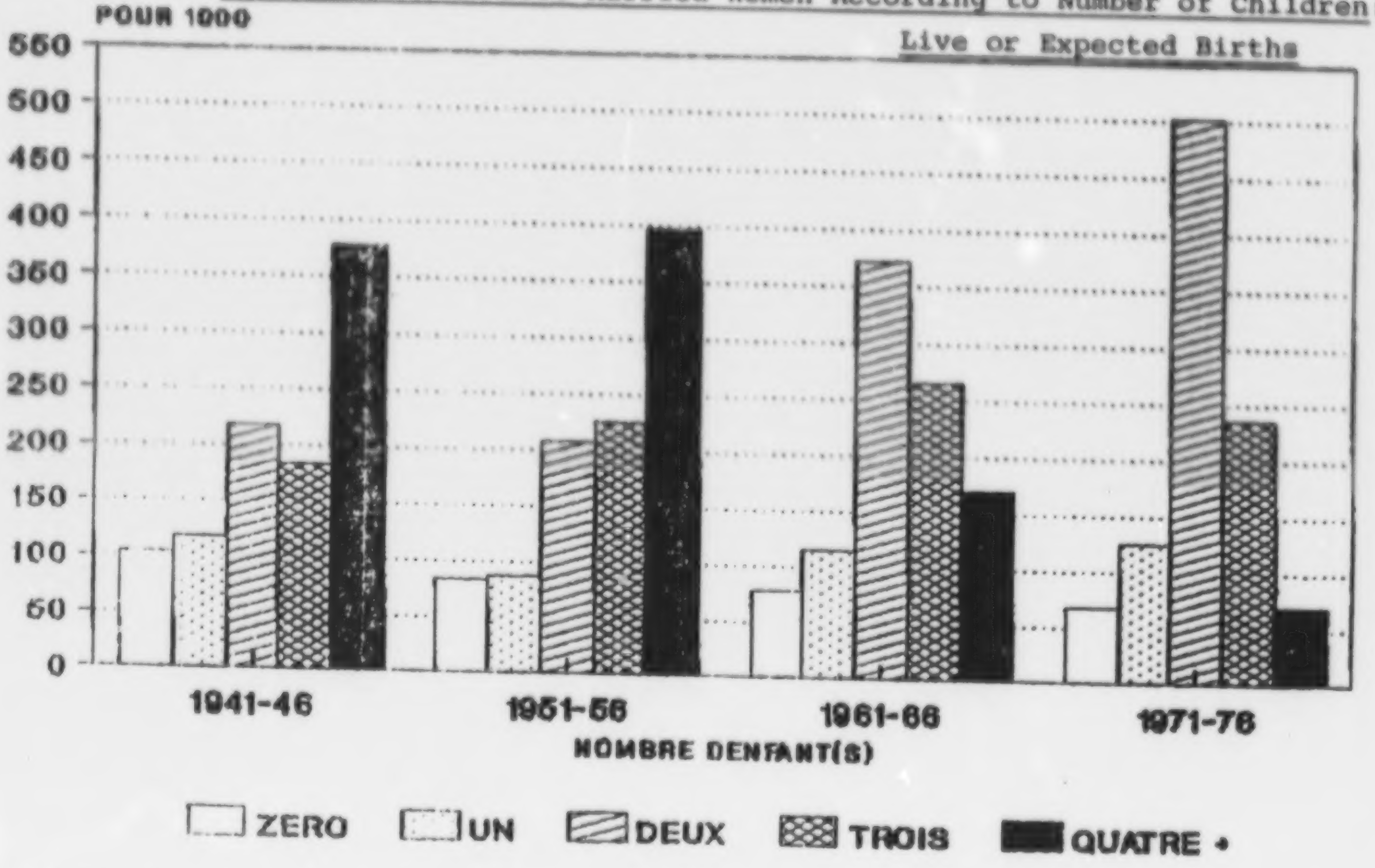
SOURCE: RECENSEMENT CANADIEN

Graphique 3

REPARTITION DE 1000 FEMMES MARIEES SELON LE NOMBRE DENFANT(S)

(NES VIVANTS OU PREVUS), CANADA

Distribution of 1000 Married Women According to Number of Children:
Live or Expected Births



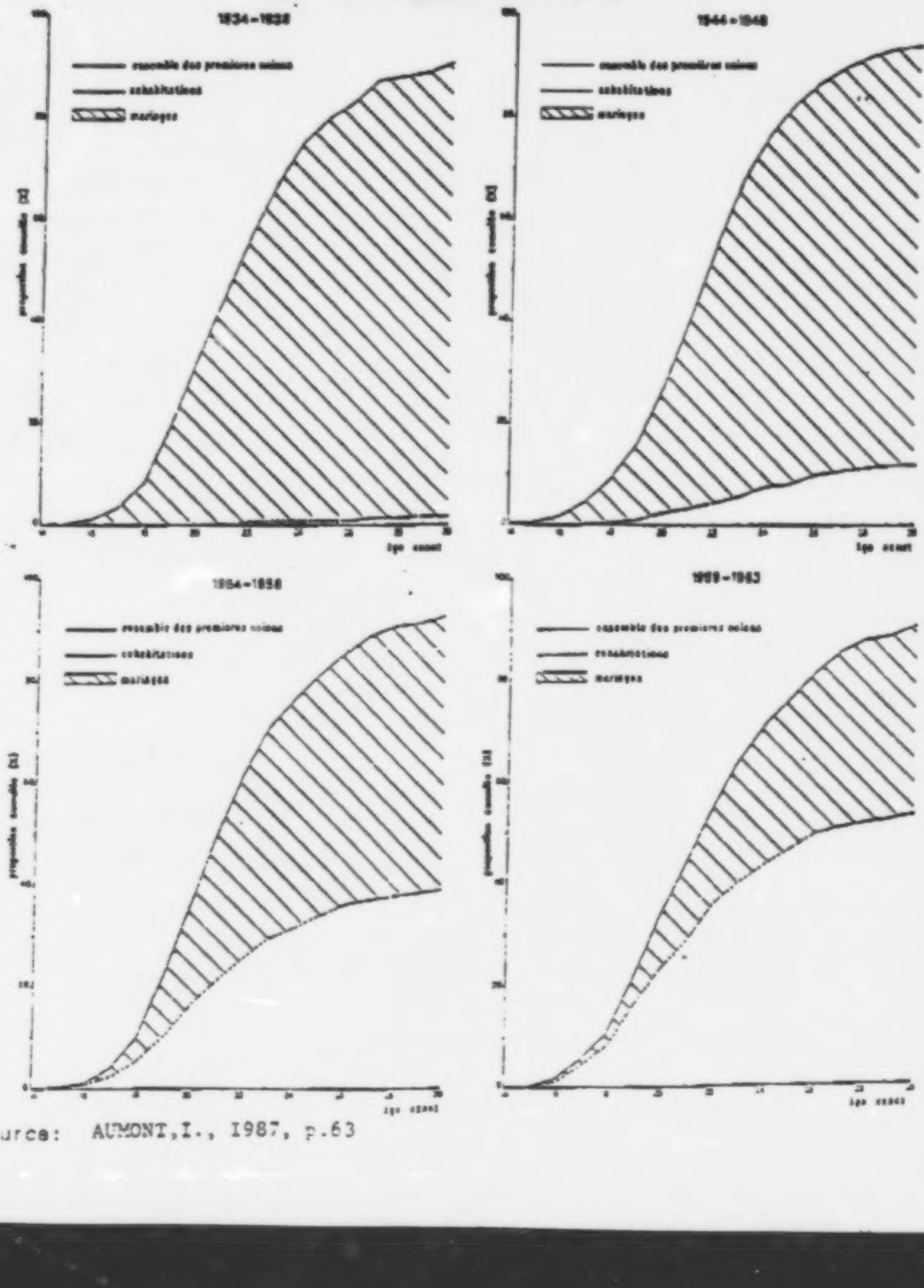
SOURCE: Revue internationale d'action communautaire, aut. '87, p.86

[illegible]

Graphique 4

Cumulative Proportion of First Unions by Type of Union and Age for Several Generations of Women, Canada, 1984 (per 100 women)

PROPORTION CUMULEE DES PREMIERES UNIONS SELON LE TYPE DE LA PREMIERE UNION ET SELON L'AGE POUR QUELQUES GENERATIONS FEMININES, CANADA, 1984 (POUR 100 FEMMES A L'ORIGINE)

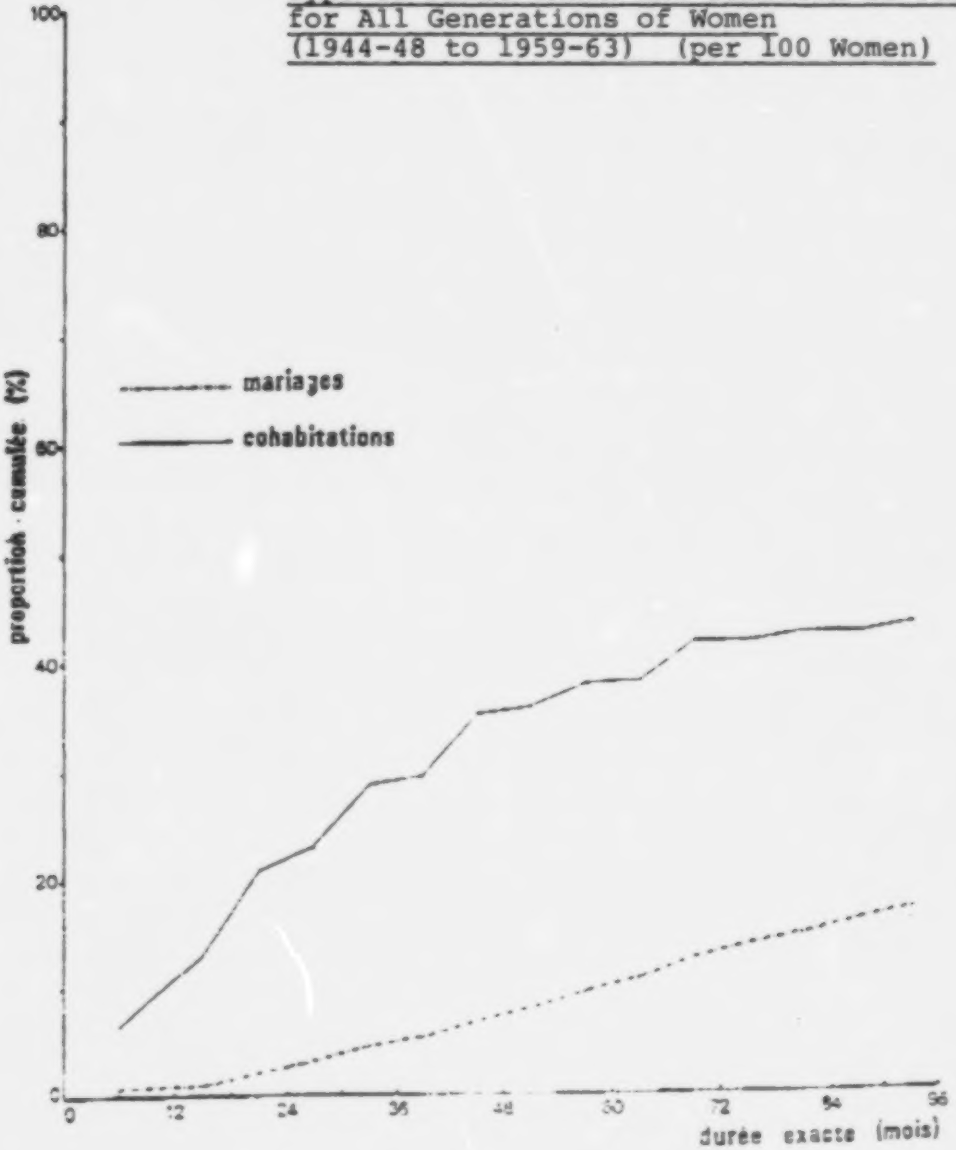


Source: AUMONT,I., 1987, p.63

Graphique 5

PROPORTION CUMULEE DES SEPARATIONS SELON LE TYPE DE LA PREMIERE UNION ET SELON LA DUREE DE L'UNION POUR L'ENSEMBLE DES GENERATIONS FEMININES (1944-1948 A 1959-1963), CANADA, 1984
(POUR 100 FEMMES A L'ORIGINE)

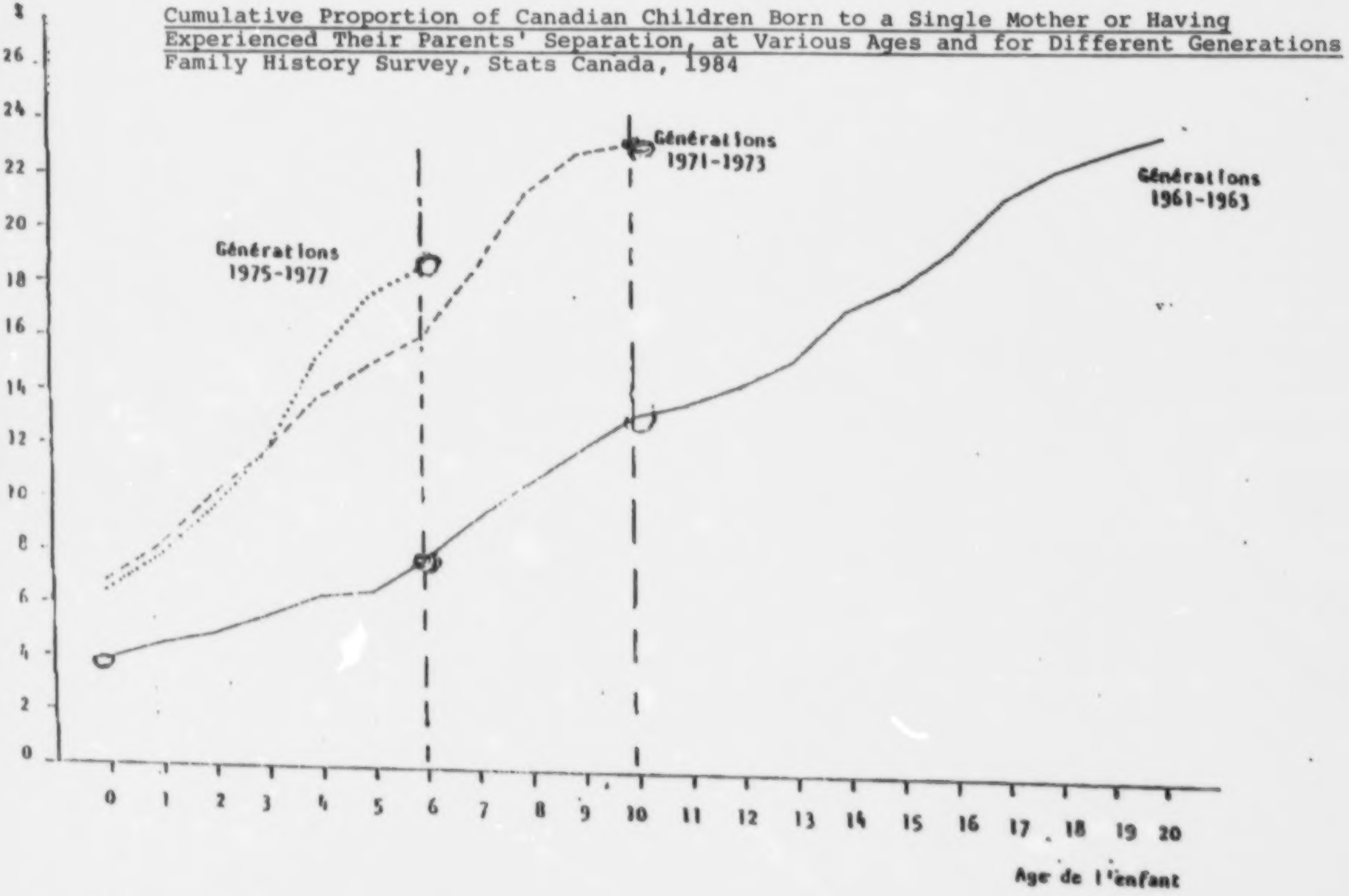
Cumulative Proportion of Separations by Type of First Union and Duration of Union, for All Generations of Women (1944-48 to 1959-63) (per 100 Women)



Source :: AUMONT, I., 1987, p.92

Graphique 6

Pourcentage cumulé des enfants canadiens qui sont nés d'une mère vivant seule ou qui ont connu la séparation de leurs parents, à différents anniversaires de naissance et pour diverses générations.
Enquête sur la famille, Statistique Canada 1984.

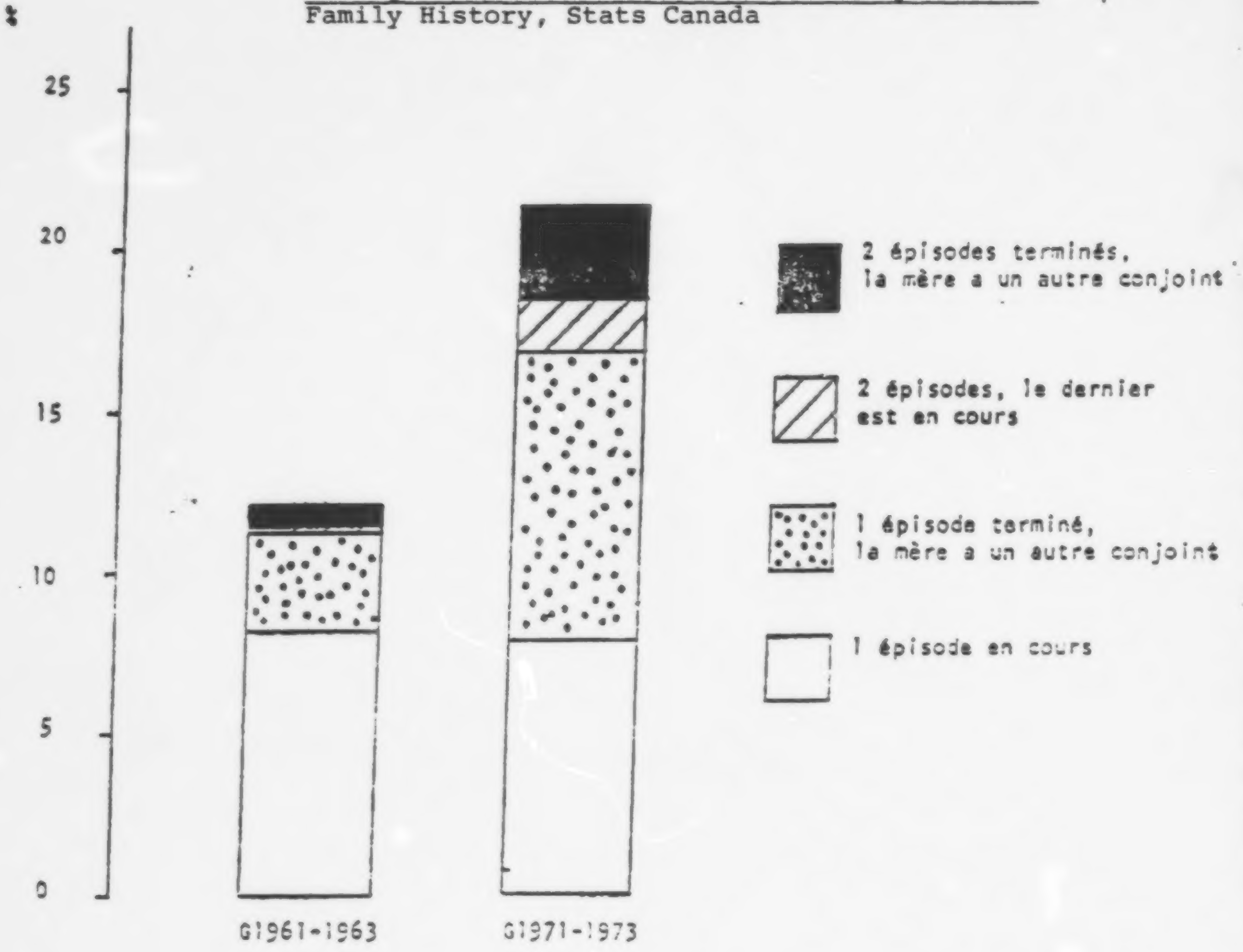


Cumulative Proportion of Canadian Children Born to a Single Mother or Having Experienced Their Parents' Separation, at Various Ages and for Different Generations
Family History Survey, Stats Canada, 1984

Graphique 7

Nombre d'épisodes vécus en famille monoparentale parmi les enfants qui sont demeurés avec leur mère jusqu'à l'âge de 10 ans.
Enquête sur la famille, Statistique Canada.

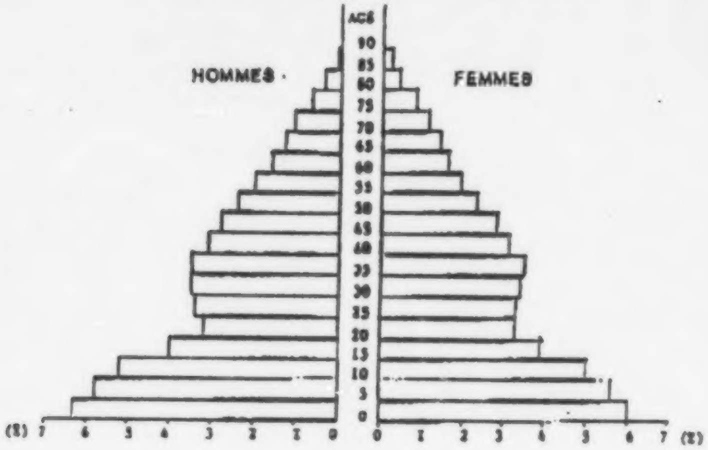
Number of Episodes in Long-parent Families Among Children Living with Their Mother Until the Age of Ten
Family History, Stats Canada



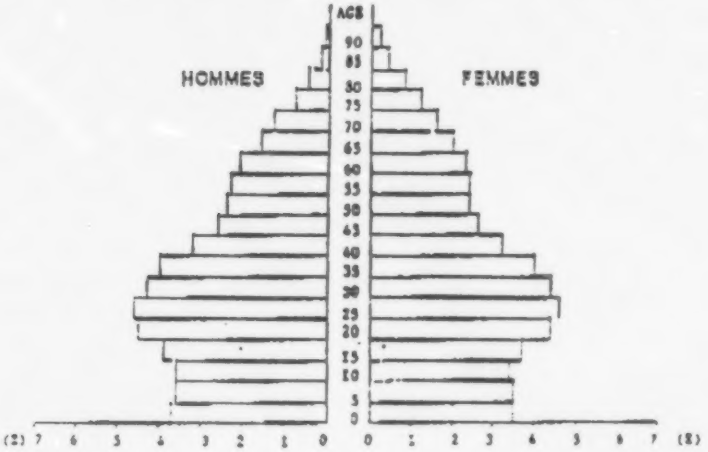
Note: Les enfants décédés ou qui ont été confiés à une autre personne avant leur 10e anniversaire ont été exclus de ce graphique.

Graphique 8

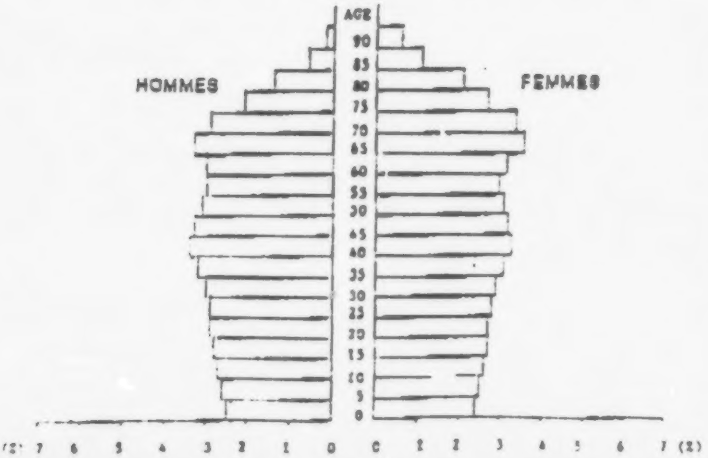
PYRAMIDE DES AGES, CANADA, 1961



PYRAMIDE DES AGES, CANADA, 1986

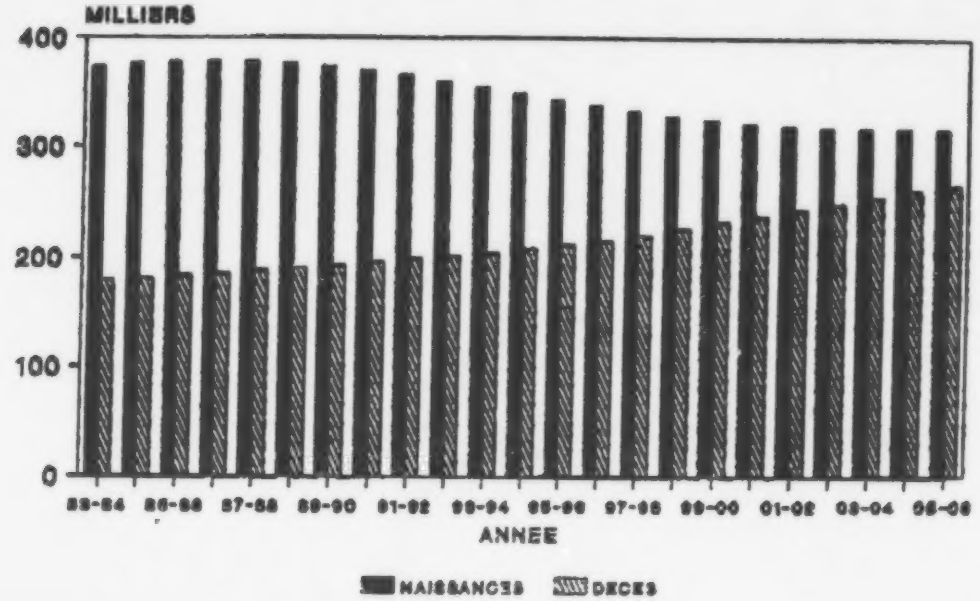


PYRAMIDE DES AGES, CANADA, 2031



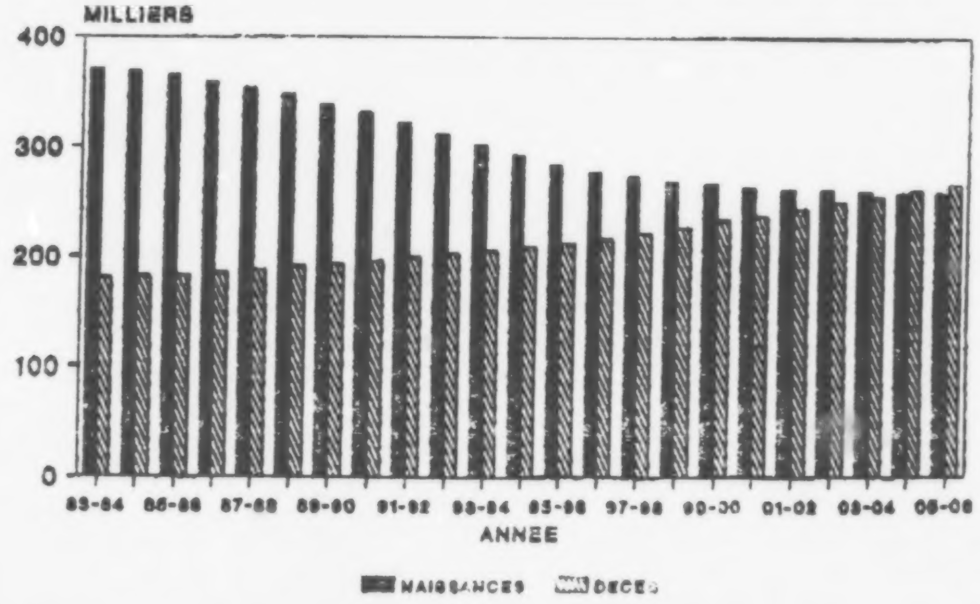
Graphique 9

NAISSANCES ET DECES PROJETES,
CANADA, 1983-84 A 2005-06
PROJECTION # 3



SOURCE: Projections démographiques pour
le Canada les provinces....p. 80

NAISSANCES ET DECES PROJETES,
CANADA, 1983-84 A 2005-06
PROJECTION # 2



SOURCE: Projections démographiques pour
le Canada les provinces....p. 73

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF ROBERT GLOSSOP PH.D.
Canada's Families Today

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Dr. Robert Glossop Coordinator of Programs, Vanier Institute of the Family. Publications and addresses on factors affecting quality of family life in Canada today.

PRESENTATION:

A summary review of facts, figures and trends about family life reveals both patterns of continuity and patterns of change.[1] Marriage and family commitments continue to be, for a large majority, integral parts of the lives of Canadian men and women. Perhaps reflecting more our beliefs about ourselves than our actual behaviours, Canadians do, when asked by Decima or Gallup, declare that their families are central to their lives and are the most important elements in their satisfaction and happiness. We declare quite readily that our families are more important to us than our jobs, incomes, political commitments and religious convictions.

Today, marriage is often delayed and preceded by a temporary period of cohabitation. The idea of marriage still suggests to most a permanent commitment, but, divorce has become a common and largely accepted practice perceived to be not the cause of marriage breakdown but simply the formal acknowledgement that a relationship has already ended. Marriage does not, as perhaps it once did, necessarily imply a willingness or desire to bear and raise children. There have been notable increases in rates of cohabitation and intentional childlessness. The most frequent consequence of divorce is remarriage.

A very large minority of children will experience life in a one-parent family, most often a female-headed family, during their childhood or youth. And, a majority of these children will later experience life with a step-parent. From an all-time low of 8.2%, the proportion of families led by a single parent had returned to approximately 13% by 1986.

More often than not today, women simultaneously combine childrearing and employment. Reflecting the dramatic increase in the proportion of young women with children active in the labour force is the fact that the most prevalent form of family today is the dual wage-earner family. The distribution of poverty among Canadians is related to their family circumstances including their marital status, number of children and number of wage-earners and the largest group of poor Canadians today is children. Despite the dramatic increase in the number of families who now rely on the earnings of two wage-earners, the median family income calculated in constant dollars has not increased since 1979. Average family incomes have been maintained only by virtue of the emergence of the two wage-earner family as the statistical norm and, as such, the situation of those families who, for whatever reasons, rely on one wage earner or no wage earner has deteriorated in relative terms. 2

It is obvious to all that children increasingly receive care from adults other than their parents and this is true for 1/3 of the children whose mothers are not in the labour force as well as for those whose mothers are employed.

Canada's population is aging because adults, on average, now choose to bear fewer children than previous generations and not longer bear enough to replace themselves. Immigration is likely to play a more important role in the coming decades than in the past and the multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic character of Canada will become more pronounced. There is no epidemic of adolescent pregnancy with rates of both pregnancy and childbearing having declined in recent years among this age group. There has, indeed, been an increase in the number of children born outside of marriage such that 16.7% of all live births were to women who were not married at the time of the birth, but, these increases reflect most the fertility of women between the ages of 20 and 30 who, although unmarried, may or may not be living in a stable relationship of cohabitation.

These facts and figures serve to document the diversity of contemporary family life, a diversity of both form and of functional patterns. Generalizations about the "average" family no longer suffice, if ever they did, as the basis for government policies and programs, corporate personnel practices, the organization and administration of schools and education and so on.

The fact is that policies and programs will affect different families differently. The facts and figures just presented illustrate how families differ from one another by virtue of: their heritages of ethnic, cultural, racial and linguistic traditions; their socio-economic status and the ways in which they divide responsibilities to ensure economic survival; the ages, sexes and capacities of their members; and by the characteristics of the communities, locations and regions in which they live.3

By way of a concrete example, the availability of a range of accessible and affordable child care options may today be a necessity for the majority of families with young children but may be irrelevant to and, in fact, opposed as a costly indulgence by older families. Again, the needs of family members caring for aging parents may be a focus of government policy in years to come but may be little appreciated by those families who struggle with the needs and behaviours of their adolescent children. Educational and cultural programs intended to help preserve the distinct ethnic identities of minority populations may be valued as essential to the maintenance of family life as it is known by the beneficiaries of such programs, but, may be dismissed as superfluous and even "anti-family" by members of the majority. A final example of how policies and programs affect different families differently is provided by the recent federal budget and its provision to implement the so-called "clawback" of family allowance benefits from so-called high-income earners on the basis of calculations of individual and not family incomes; the consequence of that decision is that a single wage-earning family earning around $55,000 per year will lose all of its family benefit while the dual wage-earning family earning a total of $99,000 per year with earnings equally split between the two wage earners will not be subject to the "clawback".

It is evident, then, that the interests of families differ and these competing interests do find their expression in the increasingly polarized and politicized debate between those who would change reality in order to fit prescriptive, normative and moralistic definitions and those who seek to change the legitimated definitions of family in order to better fit the evolving realities of family relationships and responsibilities.

The conclusion one draws from the portrait of family diversity is that no singular or unitary family policy can adequately address the needs of Canada's families. It is also apparent that such an approach to family policy matters would be politically unrealistic. On the contrary, the objective of family policy initiatives will be to bring coherence to a diverse range of flexible and open policies and programs oriented to the complex and multiple needs and circumstances of Canada's families.

Just as it is important to acknowledge that policies and programs may affect different families differently, it is also essential to appreciate how they may affect the different members of families differently. Policies and programs intended to serve the interests of a family may advance or jeopardize the interests of individuals. For example, the apparent stability of marriage might be increased by simply restricting divorce but such "stability" might well be at odds with the interests of an abused woman or child.

While diversity is a central characteristic of contemporary family life, all families do assume common tasks and responsibilities on behalf of their members and on behalf of the society as a whole. As Robert Rice has stated: "Function indicates social utility"4 which reminds us that society depends at least as much upon families as families do upon society. By identifying and emphasizing what families do, in distinction from the less helpful but more common tendency to emphasize what families look like, it is possible to uncover the basis for a realistic definition of family useful for the purposes of public policy development.

The functions of families may be described in a variety of ways and combinations. Zimmerman's typology is useful from a policy pcint of view because it includes the significant benefits that ideally accrue to both individuals and to society by virtue of a family's performance of its functions:

> physical maintenance and care of family members;
>
> addition of new members through procreation or adoption and their relinquishment when mature;
>
> socialization of children for adult roles, such as those of spouse, parent, worker, neighbour, voter, and community member;
>
> social control of members, which refers to the maintenance of order within the family and groups external to it;
>
> production and consumption of goods and services needed to support and maintain the family unit; and,
>
> maintenance of family morals and motivation to ensure task performance both within the family and in other social groups.5

Families are supported and/or constrained in the performance of their functional tasks of care, education, control, economic maintenance and nurturance by a large variety of public policies. There are, most obviously, those policies and programs that are explicitly intended to influence the capacities of families to fulfil these responsibilities or the ways in which they do so. Included in this category would be such policies and programs as:

child- and family-oriented income support programs and taxation policies; family life education programs; pre-natal nutrition and counselling programs; subsidized housing programs for low-income and/or lone-parent families; family recreation programs; broadly-defined employee assistance programs; a wide range of family counselling programs; laws and regulations pertaining to contraceptive practices and sex education; and, last but not least, policies and programs of supplemental child care.

Equally important are those public policies and programs (as chosen and administered by governments, employers, churches, school boards, voluntary organizations, and so) that influence, but unintentionally and/or indirectly, the capacity of families to fulfil their family responsibilities. The list of policies and programs in this latter category is long indeed and includes such diverse examples as: employment policies and wage scales; labour force adjustment policies that stimulate the geographical mobility of workers; media regulations; student loan programs; neighbourhood and community design policies; delinquency and correctional policies and programs and so on and so forth.6

From the point of view of the policy-maker, the challenge of family matters and family change is two-fold. First, how can the policies and programs that exist across a broad array of public policy domains - health, income security, housing, social services, education and employment - be coordinated, monitored and assessed in terms of their impacts, singly and collectively, on the functioning of families and the patterns of continuity and change in Canadian family life? Second, how can we utilize those values that express the personal and societal significance of our primary relationships - our emotional commitments, our relationships of material interdependence and our patterns of familial interaction - as a normative guide to the assessment of policies and programs that are not explicitly designed to influence families but which do exert significant effects on their capacities and functioning?

The coordination and assessment of public policies affecting families either directly and intentionally or indirectly and unintentionally are prerequisites to the development of coherent public policies to enhance the quality of family life. The essential elements of such a family policy approach are:

-assurances of adequate family income and material security through a combination of employment policies, tax provisions and cash transfers;

-provision of a broad and well-integrated system of educational, physical and mental health promotive programs and remedial services;

-implementation of appropriate mechanisms to monitor, assess and control the effects of all public policies on the functioning of families.7

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3. For an appreciation of how families differ one from another, see:

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7. See, for instance:

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF EDWARD N. HERBERG, PH.D.
Canada's Families Today

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Dr. Herberg could not appear at the Symposium due to illness. His paper is presented here with his permission.

PAPER:

CANADA'S ETHNIC FAMILIES --YESTERYEAR, TODAY, TOMORROW: STRUCTURES AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Ethnic Families are Still Dominant

Three-quarters of Canadian families today are Ethnic families--ones in which both spouses identify with the same ethnic, racial and/or religious group (E. Herberg, 1988, 186-191). Also the family in Canada remains the primary vehicle for ethnic cultural learning, and the forum within which socialization and behavioral patterns are acquired and reinforced.

Multiple Ethnic Family Structures Exist

There are at least four different family structures in Canada today, ranging all the way from the traditional family types characteristic of immigrant families in the distant past (and even recently), to those families who have either largely lost any strong sense of ethnic group identity, or who retain their group identity but remain residentially isolated from their family of origin, and sometimes interactionally apart from their ethnic community as well. Each type of ethnic family structure represents a slightly different challenge to government and other policy planners, particularly in the present era of multicultural policies and legislation.

The Extended Family

Rarer than in the past, but still very much present, is the tri-generation family within the same household: the (classical) Extended family structure consisting of grandparent(s), parents and children, not infrequently also including unmarried siblings of the parents. Relationships within this type of ethnic family structure tend to be traditional, that is patriarchic, and power is related directly with age. Grandparents in this structure have important economic and social functions in the household, especially with regard to family decision-making, resolution of within-family problems, and linking the extended family unit to the wider ethnic enclave in the city. Members of the extended ethnic family often direct their primary loyalty first to their family unit, and second, to their ethnic community, if they possess even a moderate sense of identity with their cultural heritage, race, and/or religion. Only after family and ethnicity will consideration be given to non-family, non-ethnic group concerns and influences.

To encompass such ethnic extended families, planners and service providers must frankly acknowledge the power of the family and group loyalties, and understand the nature of the ethnic group culture, at least in its general parameters. Especially important here is how that group culture varies from the one derived from urban, post-industrial technology, and from that of the government and other organizations that follow this "technoculture." Appeals or requirements to follow these policy prescripts may well be ignored by members of the extended ethnic family, in favour of the norms in the long-devoted-to ethnic group culture. Instead, it more often is the ethnic culture which dictates the values and procedures whereby daily life is conducted in Canadian cities for the members of the extended ethnic family. In rural locales, this is even more the case.

The Modified-Extended Ethnic Family

More frequent is a variation of the classical extended family structure, the Modified-Extended family, in which each nuclear unit (only parents plus children) of the whole family network resides in their separate, but close-by residence. In this way, the nuclear form of family structure, thought to be most functional to urban life, is combined with physical proximity to other parts of the kin network, forming a functional substitute for the primordial classical extended ethnic family structure. Fairly often, multiple sets of modified-extended families with the same ethnic, racial, religious identity, and who may trace their origins to the same region in the old country, have taken up residence in one urban neighbourhood, often in new housing developments in the suburbs. This recreation of the traditional village now in a Canadian urban locale, is characterized by exchanges between not just the segments of the modified-extended families but also between different modified, extended networks, in services and goods, accompanied by high levels of sustained social interaction.

This Canadian-origin modified-extended ethnic family generally maintains the same intensity of intra-family and ethnic group loyalty as exists within the classical extended family structure, because of the proximity of family residences. Yet, because each nuclear unit does reside in a separate household from the other elements in the kin web, any one family unit can and does operate independently of other parts of the modified-extended family, at least in some family functions and/or activities. Along with this comes a greater degree of integration of each nuclear segment in the wider community, where it pursues its own interests. Concomitantly, the members of each modified-extended segment family exhibit a greater tendency than the classical extended family to follow the "rational" norms institutionalized at most places of work, in government, and in other organizations. Still, each nuclear part of the modified-extended ethnic family is strongly committed, both to retaining the solidarity of the kin web, and to enjoy and follow ethnic group cultural forms. Thus, those concerned with family policy must be sensitive to the content of the ethnic group culture. They must, furthermore, not just tolerate but truly respect the ways the family members believe and act in concordance with their group ethnoculture.

The Nuclear Ethnic Family

Very numerous in Canada is the two-generation Nuclear family structure of parents and children, sometimes containing a widowed grandparent who has, or wants no other residence. Usually, each nuclear family unit is residentially distant from the others and from the senior members. Even so, congregation of the separated nuclear unit is regular, especially at ethnically ceremonial times. Also, widespread exchange amongst the multiple nuclear units of the entire family has developed, including services and money over distance. Frequent telephone and letter communication is maintained between the remote nuclear elements.

Nuclear ethnic families range between extremes in their ethnic group identity. Many such families continue to possess an exceptionally strong sense of identification with their ethno-racial group. They follow the values of the ethnic culture within their family, and make regular participation in their local ethnic community - a mainstay of their family life.

Other nuclear families, however, consciously segregate themselves from their original ethnic heritage, and pattern their values and behaviour to be as "Canadian" as possible, sometimes moving out of the traditional ethnic religion to a "Canadian" religion, like the United Church or Anglican Church. Such families try to be conspicuously secular and "modern" (non-ethnic) in their thinking and socialization of their children. These de-ethnicized nuclear families may especially avoid gatherings of the entire clan in their effort to assume a "Canadian" cultural life pattern, having rejected their ethnic heritage, and recognizing that family gatherings have a strong undertone of ethnic cultural celebration. This kind of nuclear family tends to utilize rather egalitarian spousal and parent-child relationships. It is these nuclear families, too, that most complement and benefit from the secularized, rational urban culture underlying so much of past family policy and programming, especially by government in their legislative or other policy developmental activities.

Those nuclear families, though, that maintain high ethnic group cohesion despite separation from the remainder of the ethnic family clan--perhaps a majority of nuclear families in Canada--represent a problem for the rational bureaucracies that must try to develop family policies founded in the secular, universalistic principles they (must?) follow. Like the classical and modified-extended ethnic families, these nuclear families follow a different cultural imperative: their ethnic heritage and collectivity. Thus, these families may be perceived by policy and programme officials as "resistant" deviant and/or needing special surveillance, to assure that law and policy are followed. Ironically, even such ethnically committed nuclear families generally exhibit more egalitarian and "modern" values and practices than is so in the two extended family types in which family and ethnicity are much more interpenetrating.

The Native Peoples Family Structure

The fourth type of ethnic family type is the Native Peoples family structure, far more inclusive than even the European-based classical extended family. The Native family structure has its origins in the ancient Indian-Inuit culture of clan and band organization, and continues today on the reserves, other rural places of Native residential concentration, and even in the urban places of Canada, albeit in a quite attenuated form. It has a far more ancient, unbroken lineage than any of the other three ethnic family types in Canada, being founded in and based today in the collective enterprise of the entire family or clan network to assure the survival and prospering of all in the family circle. This collective orientation of widely defining who are family members and members' cooperation has continued relatively unabated from the misty yesteryears of the Indians' earliest appearance in Canada, literally scores of millennia prior to the arrival of Europeans here.

The Native family structure begins with the elders of the family, and extends not just vertically to include their children and grandchildren, but laterally as well, embracing adult siblings and cousins and their spouses and children. Even close friends of the family are enroled as honourary family members who routinely are involved in family activities. Members of the Native family participate in the mutual-aid and exchange relationships that bind all the members into an intimate, solitary unit benefitting all generations and members.

Individual members or nuclear units of the Native family that are separated from it (e.g., those seeking a life in the cities), can therefore be quire hazardously dysfunctioned by their loss of access to the resources of the entire, interdependent Native family. Urban Native family segments are particularly vulnerable to stresses and problems of survival, because the complete Native family structure apparently is not yet, or is not able to be transplanted from its traditional home to the urban environment.

Most Native families try to maintain their ancient culture and traditional practices, even in the face of a rapidly declining level of language retention (E. Herberg, 1988, 106-109) and a rather low degree of residential proximity amongst urban Native People (E. Herberg, 188, 136-138). Native cultural prescriptions markedly differ from those of the urban technoculture, by emphasizing collective and not individualized effort, and being part of, not the controller of nature and life. Because of this, Native families have often come afoul of the urban, universalistic standards set out in family legislation, official regulations and agency standards.

This has been most notable in the past regarding the application of urban, post-industrial standards of child and family welfare on Native families in the bands, on reserves. Here I refer NOT to actual child abuse or neglect, or wife-battering, but to other aspects of Native family life, as the number of persons per bedroom; adults and children sleeping he the same room; eating, socializing and sleeping in the same room; and the like. The operational style in Native Peoples families continues to be very much a collective one today, quite variant from the implicit definition of "normal" family structure and process that segregates adults from children in leisure, sleeping and even eating, and people into their constituent nuclear segments separated from each other, and which isolate adults completely on their own. Because the Native family and its cultural practices are unbroken continuations of ancient tradition, Native families are much more resistant and reluctant to alter their family standards than were the immigrants from Britain, Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, who often readily did change their family mechanisms to those defined to them as desirable in their new Canadian home.

It is because of this reliance on and inability to alter the nature of the Native family (because it is an inseparable part of a very different and holistic life culture), that Native families have so often been the target of "corrective" or "ameliorative" policy and programme recommendations. These have subtlely but derogatively labelled Native family structure and practices as deficient, inferior, or/and requiring official surveillance. Difference was defined then as being unfit and harmful, because any departure from the official standards by any individuals or group was deemed to injure the entire community.

Multiculturalism and Canada's Ethnic Families

The demographic and legal fundamentals that have transformed Canada into a multicultural mosaic are very tightly connected to the policies and programmes for ethnic families in this country now and in the future. Foremost amongst legislation is the CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS, part of our 1982 Constitution Act, which established ethnic, racial, and religious group equality rights (Section 15.1), and mandated the "preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians" (Section 27). Allied to this is the 1988 Multiculturalism mandate to "promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of an respect for...(and) are sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality" of Canada (Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, Multiculturalism, 1987, 21). Together with similar provincial and municipal pronouncements, these obligate all government and other policy-programme planning authorities to conform to group equality rights in family policy development and implementation.

Implications for Ethnic Family Policies and Programmes

Given the fact that overwhelmingly, Canada's families are ethnic families, and that both law and policy must recognize and respect ethnic group cultural differences, family policy in this nation henceforth must incorporate a multicultural orientation to family structures and cultural practices. That is, government and private sector organizations involved with family policy or programming now have the onus to plan for and deal with families in ways congruous to their ethnocultures. Officials must expunge and never again permit law, policy and practice that contradict ethnic group cultural consent, except for extreme contravention of policy and law, such as family violence and child abuse. This is because, according to the Charter, the Canadian ethnic group culture has legitimate standing in this country, equal to the culture of each of the so-called Charter groups, the British and the French. Indeed, the cultures of each of these two ethnicities should no more represent a preferred family cultural standard than the culture of any other group.

An essential element in implementing the precept of ethnic group cultural equality at all levels of family policy formation is to establish and publicize an anti-racism, anti-discrimination (that is a multicultural) principle that henceforth governs all family legislation, policy and programming. This is necessary because such discrimination is so corrosive of equitable and effective family policies in Canada, that this multicultural principle must be quite deliberately proclaimed before any progress can be attained.

Second, having established and proclaimed a multicultural principle as the central criterion, government and private sector organizations must develop new family policies and programmes that complement and preserve ethnic group cultures, not violate them. Ways must be found to use groups' cultural contents to benefit family policy formation, and the various family support and intervention programmes. No longer can policy planners consider themselves in an adversarial relationship with families whose cultures vary from what previously was considered as the standard in Canada.

Next, alliances should be forged between government and other policy-programmes offices and ethnic community organizations and service agencies* to aid in the development and implementation of culturally sensitive family policies. This is because the ethnic organizations comprise a singular repository of information and experience about how policies and programmes affect, and are utilized by members of their ethnic communities. In turn, this is due to the fact that people in Canadian minority groups often prefer to seek aid from these ethno-specific organizations (as these are sometimes, rather cumbersomely termed), because they expect cultural receptivity, not rejection there, or expect/have received cultural insensitivity at mainstream organizations, including government (Salvendy, 1983; Canadian Task Force, 1988, 47-52).

While these ethnic group organizations possess the skills of ethnocultural sensitivity in policy and service, they quite typically are very much underfunded, understaffed, and must utilize staff who tend to be professionally undereducated. In contrast, government and the private sector have access to more adequate funding and more staff, who possess much more professional training. Combining the resources of ethnic and mainstream organizations offers an excellent avenue for developing the truly informed and culturally integrated family policies Canadians need.

An important means to accomplish cultural equality is to train all policy and service workers to be competent Multicultural workers. This does not mean that they must become knowledgeable about every aspect of multiple ethno-racial cultures. To the contrary, they need only to learn general, central conceptual principles that govern ethnic group cultures in Canada, how these principles apply in family life situations (including service situations), and participate in activities that foster understanding and respect for different cultural elements and values (D. Herberg, 1985). In this way policy and service staff will learn about the major dimensions of and differences between the cultures of the various ethnic, racial and religious collectivities, and beyond that, to apply groups' cultural contents in ways that benefit the incorporation of cultural sensitivity and equality rights into new family policies.

Implementing such new multicultural policies will also require the reciprocal exchange of aid between ethnic and mainstream agencies in training activities. Staff of the ethnic agencies comprise an exceptionally valuable resource for the training of mainstream agency staff in cultural sensitivity and multicultural service delivery. In exchange, people from the mainstream agencies, amongst others, can help upgrade the professional planning and service skills of ethnic agency staffs. In both sides of the equation, using special curricula, field training, in-service education, all through the medium of "cultural brokers," will be required (Canadian Task Force, 1988, 53-57).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, special family policies and programmes for Native Peoples must be developed and implemented, in part to redress these families who have borne the brunt of (we now recognize) past governmental and agency discrimination, and the ignoring or violation of Native family culture. An essential element in this must be the elimination of the long-extant, pervasive structural racism against the Native Peoples. Thus, analogous to their traditional cultural forms of mutual exchange and collective enterprise in Native families and communities must be developed to support urban Native family units. It is just these Native People who are disproportionately experiencing severe family dysfunction. These new policies must be crafted so that (1) the new policies and standards that governments and agencies will be following will complement, not contradict traditional Native family forms, and (2) no disjuncture will be caused between urban Native families and the Native Peoples on reserves or other Native communities.

Relatedly, in view of the likelihood that Native autonomy will be established in the immediate to near future, it is critically important to consider how the family policies and programmes of both senior and junior levels of government can be developed to mesh with and supplement the special conditions and perspectives that Native self-government will possess. Undoubtedly, the models of development and operation of existing Native community agencies amongst the Ontario Iroquois, Ojibway and Cree, the Quebec Cree, and Native Peoples in many other parts of Canada to serve educational, economic, health or family-child welfare, can serve as useful exemplars. What must be foremost in such new autonomous Native enterprises is that the culture and goals of each Native group regarding family structure and process must have primacy over non-Native, urban standards and prescriptions that still today, unfortunately hold sway.

Native family policy cannot any longer be held to ransom under the kinds of governmental and other structural biases that have so damaged not Native families and communities alone, but more amongst Natives than those in other Canadian minorities. While Native policy developers undoubtedly will welcome the participation of non-Natives in creating autonomous Native family policies and their service implementations, it must be the Native Peoples themselves who possess the ultimate decisions-making power in this.

Summary

There are at least four types of family structures in Canada today: the EXTENDED, MODIFIED-EXTENDED, NUCLEAR AND NATIVE PEOPLES. Because marriage within the ethnic, racial, religious group predominates in this country, dimensions of family structure are inevitably interwoven with ethnic cultural values and practices, even if one of the family structures is in part associated with repudiation of the ethnic culture. These connections between family structure and ethnoculture have major implications for family policy development and reformulation. And, because of the minority rights section of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, together with the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, family policy henceforth must, first, conform to requirements of respect for each ethnoculture, and second, complement each group's family patterns. There will be obvious exceptions in this, as the contraventions of the criminal or civil codes, e.g. denial of spousal rights and family violence.

The condition of Native families and policies directed at them are probably the most contentious concerns today, in part because of the centuries-long discrimination directed at Canada's First Nations. Moreover, with the emergence of Native Peoples governmental autonomy being likely, policies concerning Native families will have to be completely reformulated. This will probably be accomplished with the participation of non-Natives, but must be controlled by the Native Peoples themselves.

The situation of Native family policy development of the future, however, is but an extreme instance of how the new legislation about ethnic group cultural rights will affect the development of new policy philosophies and standards for families in every one of Canada's ethnic communities. This will require not just different strategies of policy development, but also of how government and private mainstream organizations will be brought into compliance with the new requirement for group equality rights. One of the most promising resources for accomplishing these tasks is alliances between mainstream and ethnic community organizations. At all levels of participation, both the government and private sectors, both the mainstream and the ethnic constituencies must look to cooperative innovation in family policy.

Finally, it should be noted that universally applicable--"ethno-generic"--family policies have worked beautifully with a small minority of Canada's families, and passably well with some others. But with the large majority of families and ethnic groups, such presumedly universally-applicable policies have resulted in irreparable harm to families and even entire ethnic communities when imposed by even the best-intentioned government or agency. Any policy that is based on the notion of being ethno-generic will never be effective, and cannot be prevented from inducing damage on families in many, perhaps most ethnoracial communities in Canada today and tomorrow. This is especially so for our Native families, because of the past special status, government control, and agency policies.

So, particularly with Native families, but also with those in most of the other ethnic, racial, religious communities of this nation, only policies which are planned to utilize, not reject the group cultures and practices can be permitted henceforth. This "ethno-relativistic" perspective is the only one morally and legally tenable, but it will require new ways of thinking, planning and working to develop the multifaceted family policies we need in mosaic Canada.

*An "ethnic organization" is one whose services are delivered by and to one or more particular ethnic, racial and/or religious groups, and in which use of the ethnic language(s) and observance of the ethnic culture(s) prevail.

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF LYLE LARSON, PH.D.
The Family in the Community

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PRESENTATION:

The purpose of this paper is to review some of the issues in the linkages between community context, family relationships and child development. It will be emphasized that families, in their variant structures and processes, continue to have a primary influence in the nurturance of human potential. The quality of what families achieve, however, is significantly influenced by their particular ecological environments. Communities obviously vary in policies, structures and services. The dynamic interface between the community context and families at work in the raising of their young has, perhaps, never been more important.

The first section of the paper reviews the salience of the community in understanding life in families. The nature and importance of social impact is examined in variant community contexts. The importance and relevance of family policy in establishing guidelines and perspectives in rehabilitative and preventative programs and services to families is reviewed in Section Two. Federal, provincial and community linkages between policy formulation and family intervention are considered. Section three focuses on the importance of a community focus approach, community focus facilities and community co-operation in designing and delivering services to families. The importance of preventative services is emphasized.

1. THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY CONTEXT IN FAMILY IMPACT

1.1 A NOTE ON DEFINITIONS

The term "community" is defined in a variety of ways. The nostalgic definitions which emphasize we feelings and familism are no longer used. For the purposes of this paper, I will use the dimensions adopted by Bronfenbrenner, et.al. (1984) in their article on family and community. These elements include the following:

> 1) A residence within a delimited area; 2) A set of interlocking economic and social systems serving the needs of the resident populations; and 3) Some feeling of common identity and fate.

Accordingly, the focus of this analysis is upon municipal level communities, such as the City of Edmonton, Alberta and its constituent subsystems (eg. health institutions, churches or sub communities such as Glenora). Even so, "community contexts" have broader meanings to the families who live in them. The contexts vary widely by type (rural, suburban, urban), size (farming areas, small hamlets to mega-cities) and scope (census districts to the global village) not to mention quality of life (divorce rates, pollution indexes, crime rates, employment opportunities to social services). This larger picture, while largely ignored in this paper, is nonetheless relevant to understanding community impact.

1.2 THE SALIENCE OF COMMUNITY

The most simplistic point is that families[1] live in communities. They raise their children in communities. They always have. Communities have tended to emphasize walkways, stoplights, street care and maintenance, and parks, while neglecting the social infrastructure. Indeed, a well planned and maintained physical infrastructure is not enough. Life in the community has changed! A recent news item in the Edmonton Journal (May 31, 1989, C1) quotes Parents Magazine on the top seven social problems kids faced in 1940 compared to 1980:

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[1] It is important to emphasize that the term "families" is not used as a synonym for the traditional nuclear family. The term is intended to include, by way of convenience, the nuclear family, extended families, single parent families, reconstituted families, and marriages. The local church is often referred to as a "family of families" which includes unmarried singles or the single again without children. While singles are not excluded in that they also live in and are influenced by the community context, the marital and family context is emphasized. Another issue is that parts of families (e.g., grandparents, non-custodial parents, students in college) frequently live in differing communities. Indeed, these cross-community linkages not uncommonly create new issues for families. These issues include, for example, the divergent cost of living, commuter time, cultural disparities, anxiety, loneliness, the need for support services, etc.

Child Stress in 1940	Child Stress in 1980
Talking	Drug Abuse
Chewing gum	Alcohol abuse
Making noise	Pregnancy
Running in the halls	Suicide
Cutting in line	Rape
Improper clothing	Robbery
Not using paper baskets	Assault

Raising children in many urban communities is both more complex and difficult than it used to be. A 1979 report (Larson, 1979b) examined multiple indicators of social and family problems in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary, the Province of Alberta and Canada as a whole. Trend analysis of official census and vital statistics data, as well as several unpublished data sources, revealed that rates of social and relationship trauma were sharply increasing, more so in Edmonton than in Calgary. The rates of social disarray were nearly twice as high in these municipalities than in Alberta as a whole. The rates in Alberta were nearly twice as high as for those in Canada as a whole. At the time of the study, the Province of Alberta was in a boom phase of economic development and on the edge of an unexpected downturn in oil production. Both rapid economic development and bust economies are often associated with increasing rates of social problems (Larson, 1979a). While several of these rates have slowed or declined slightly (eg. rates of child abuse) and others have continued to increase (eg. rates of sexual abuse, rates of child neglect, divorce rates since the 1985 change in the divorce act), the evidence for the continued erosion of the social fabric continues to seem apparent.

Communities are places where family members find employment (and become unemployed). Where shelter is occupied (depending on the affordability and sufficiency of housing), where the basic necessities of health are met or unmet (nutrition, pure water and air, depending on the relative cost and the adequacy of standards), and where amenities are variously available according to the needs and desires of residents (recreation, entertainment). Canadians have come to expect the good life in and from the communities in which they reside. Unemployment, wage inadequacies and inequities, inflation, and numerous other related deficits in the community profile have long been associated with family trauma and breakdown (Schottland, 1967; Chilman, et.al., 1988a). The community, whatever its structures or processes, is a salient influence in family well-being.

1.3 THE INTERACTIVE EFFECT

The community effect on families, however, is neither inclusive nor unilineal. Communities are made up of multiple subsystems (churches, schools, the communications industries, the corporate sector, health and legal institutions, community leagues and various units of government, etc.). Government policies, programs and services are neither independent of nor exempt from the intricacies and complexities of the community profile. Further, local municipal government is often limited by and subject to provincial regulation and subsidy. The province is likewise subject to federal regulation and subsidy. The hierarchical organization of these entities into agents of relative influence in family well-being is yet to be done empirically. Conceptually, however, government has the authority to establish policies and laws which organize and regulate community structures and processes. In this sense, government has considerable control in establishing, maintaining and improving optimum conditions for family well-being.

Even so, families are more than rote recipients or victims of the social order. Outcome measures are related to both social conditions and a variety of individual and family characteristics. The nature of this "interactive effect" was documented in a literature review of social and family impact research (Larson, 1979a). Families who move into rapid growth communities have different characteristics than those who choose not to move. Immigrants into new communities have multiple reasons for moving, varying from escape and emotional disorders to high aspirations for a better life. The ease of the transition is strongly associated with the active participation of wives in the decision, the amount of information and/or clarity about the prevailing conditions in the new location, the degree of family adaptability and cohesion, and the actual conditions in the new community (schools, cost of living, job opportunities, community resources, the work situation on the job, etc.). An appreciation of this interactive effect between families and community life is effectively demonstrated in highly mobile communities. Conceptually, the complex nature of these effects involves the analysis of both the characteristics of the community of destination and its residents before rapid development and the characteristics of the movers to the new community. The complexities and sequential nature of the factors in family and community adjustment are illustrated in Figure One (taken from Larson, 1979a, Pg. 134). The report also emphasized the variety of relationship issues which families must resolve in dealing with community change. The issues included the marriage relationship before the move, the processes of marital and family adjustment to necessary changes in the definition of roles, the psychological and financial resources required to realign the meaning of relationships and role of community and employer resources in facilitating adjustment to the new community. More sophisticated and detailed models of coping with family crises have now been developed (eg. McCubbin and Patterson, 1983; Boss, 1987).

In this perspective, as emphasized by Bronfenbrenner et.al. (1984), social outcomes such as the strong correlation between urban community settings and psychopathology are multiplicative rather than addictive. Certain types of families are attracted to certain communities, or to sub-communities. The community conditions (resources, amenities, work programs, services, programs, support networks) interconnect with families variously vulnerable to differing community conditions, whether these conditions are in place by intervention (political philosophy, funding priorities) or default (ie. community neglect or apathy). Indeed, the higher the "index" of community disorganization, the more likely that even healthy families will suffer relational trauma.

1.4 THE CHILD FACTOR

The ways in which communities and families care for their children, in contrast, goes beyond the issues of community salience and interaction effects. "The children that we - the parents, the schools, the church, the media (and the community) are raising today will become, with more precision than we typically are willing to accept, what we choose to help them become, whether by intention or default" (Larson, 1983; 13). Essentially, the fallout from either inadequate or detrimental community conditions is most directly experienced by children. The community effects on mental disorders are indirect, while the effects of the family on the development of mental disorders in children and adolescents are direct (Rutter, 1981). This is called the "two-stage sequence" (Bronfenbrenner, et.al., 1984; 294). The effects move from the community to the family (an "interacting effect") to the child "as one of the principal causal pathways for the operation of community influences on human development." The elegance of this model and the multiplicative effects of community and family context is demonstrated in a study by Garbarino and Crouter (1978). Two measures of family income, a measure of mobility, the percentage of single parent households, and the proportion of employed mothers with young children together explained 81% of the variance in child maltreatment. A later publication further illustrates the importance of the community variable - there is a strong negative evaluation of the neighbourhood in high risk areas of the city (Garbarino and Sherman, 1980).

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY POLICY

2.1 FAMILY IMPACT OCCURS WITH OR WITHOUT FAMILY PROGRAMS

As has been suggested, most government programs have a marked influence, directly or indirectly, on families (Schottland, 1967; Chilman, et.al., 1988a). The importance and strength of this impact, whether positive or negative, is apparent in many domains and dimensions of family life in several recent publications (Zimmerman, 1988 - see Chapters 7-10 in particular on welfare, suicide and teen birthrates, mental retardation and the elderly disabled; Kahn and Kamerman, 1988 - see Chapters 1-2 and 10-16 in particular on issues relating to child support; Wilcox and Uyeda, 1988 on mental health; Chilman, 1988b on family finances; and Nichols, 1988 on family law).

Government is not alone. Employers are likewise seemingly uninformed about the implications of their programs and policies on families: hiring and firing, promotions and transfers, training and retraining, benefit programs, retirement programs, commuter time, flex-time and job sharing, compressed work weeks and related practices. In a review of the impact of compressed work weeks on family life, for example, I concluded that at least half of eight differing types of families would experience increased conflict and likely breakup (Larson, 1974). In a more recent paper, I argue that the family is running out of time due to increased work loads, commuter time, second jobs to help cope with the cost of living and the time consumed in dual work households (Larson, 1989). Family time is in short supply. The corporate enterprise must be subject to government legislation and regulation in the interest of family well-being.

Programs laws, practices and policies abound at the federal, provincial, municipal and community subsystem level which directly or indirectly affect families. Indeed, the very absence of such programs, laws, practices or policies by intention or default (the failure to act or to even consider whether action is important) is action.

2.2 PROGRAMS AND LEGISLATION AFFECTING FAMILIES MUST BE POLICY DRIVEN

In a recent publication (Moen and Schorr, 1987), it is argued that government interest and concern about families is largely rhetoric. They say that catchy phrases are used such as "preserving," "rehabilitating," "reuniting" and "strengthening" families when the focus has been on individuals. A similar point was made sixteen years earlier by John Romanyshyn (1971: 339):

"We have extolled family life but have rarely nurtured it in

> this society. We have sought to strengthen family life without providing the basic institutional supports essential to enable the family to perform its basic functions. We have, in short, very little in the way of national family policy. Instead, we focus on individual and social problems. So powerful is our emphasis on the individual that, for the most part, our programs designed to deal with social problems have tended to ignore the fact that the individual is part of the family unit."

Moen and Schorr (1987) further argue that family concerns are really afterthoughts in government enactments. Social insurance, for example, is designed for the individual. As it turns out, social insurance also helps families. The goal was economic security and to encourage retirement. In general, government programs for dependent spouses, mothers and children are secondary concerns. It is secondly argued that a "pick-a-bick" principal operates in government programs. Families occasionally get help because their needs coincide with other national interests. Housing programs, for example, are designed as economy boosters. A fringe benefit is that families need affordable housing. Moen and Schorr also argue that almost all programs are corrective in thrust, rather than preventative, and often occur so late that little substantive help occurs.

Policy is the backbone or cornerstone of every goal oriented organization. It represents the basic guidelines for action and non action. It defines the basic rules in the formulation of specific policies, and sets the parameters for the evaluation of all proposals. It is management by objective. Without a set of general objectives, regardless of the level of government (federal, provincial or community) programs, legislation and services will be without direction. According to Zimmerman (1988), family policy is different from social policy in that it focuses on families instead of individuals. The following definition of "family policy" is partly based on the thoughts of Moen and Schorr (1987) and Zimmerman (1988).

> "Family policy is a widely agreed on set of objectives for child and family well-being, the establishment of which shall guide and rationalize programs, services and all derivative policies."

Without a family policy, programs will tend to A) have an individualistic bias and B) a particularistic and independent rather than interdependent focus. The continued absence of an effective federal family policy, concrete family policies in each province or community level, family policy continues to reinforce a piece meal, haphazard, election goody set of ideas about ways of promoting family and child well-being. The Province of

British Columbia is not taking awkward or uninformed steps these days. In 1975, the provincial legislature approved a resolution that said among other things that the:

> "Province ... recommend to the public and to the various levels of government, policies that will diminish the difficulties and enhance the opportunities for a healthy and happy family life (Friesen and Butler, 1979)."

Based on this resolution, the B.C. House established the British Columbia Council on the Family with a mandate to A) facilitate self-help projects to support and strengthen families, and B) to further public knowledge and promote public concern about the well-being of the family. In contrast to the White House Conference on Families (White House, 1980), the B.C. Council has successfully launched policy driven programs which respect family diversity while affirming the potential and well being of marital and family well-being[2]. Current programs include a provincial wide marital preparation program and a pregnancy control program, which are widely advertised in newspapers and in snappy and effective television spots. Well written instruction handbooks have been prepared for blended families, single parents, parents of teens and growth for marriage. Based on materials I have reviewed, the British Columbia program seems to be a provincial model worth emulating.

The list of essential preventative programs and legislation in affirming and promoting the well-being of children and families is long. In a recent evaluation of such recommended actions, a panel of Edmonton "experts" agreed on the priority of 8 general and 26 specific actions at the federal level, 14 general and 65 specific actions at the provincial level (Larson, 1980: 431-444). There were 8 general and 48 specific action priorities recommended at the municipal level (Larson, 1980: 422-431). Similarly, the establishment of a family policy would also require modifying or eliminating - or resisting proposed - programs and/or legislation which impedes child and family well-being. The most primitive, but essential step, is to establish clear standards by which to evaluate existing programs and policies with respect to child and family well-being (such as proposed in the United States by Gary Bauer, 1986).

Enacting new programs or policies these days, let alone modifying existing ones, is uniquely complex, regardless of the level of government. Pluralism is no longer simply a variety of life styles to respect and support. Pluralism now means competing rights and demands for special recognition, the interests of other groups notwithstanding. Pluralism means special interest groups, often effectively organized into lobby groups. Each frequently has an unbending, non-negotiable agenda. It is not uncommon for essential and well thought legislation to fall at feet of unending harassment, persuasive second thoughts, or the lack of political will. For MLA's, MP's, or city council members to do nothing is safer than the fallout from actions that guarantee an outcry. Although small in size, mini-groups can readily create mega discomfort. These considerations notwithstanding, family well-being and the developmental needs of children, cannot be held hostage by either ill thought action or inaction. Families deserve more than political rhetoric or sloganeering. Families and children deserve sophisticated and

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[2] For further information contact the British Columbia Council for the Family, 200-1687 W. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., V6J 1X2, 604-732-4838.

creative federal, provincial, and community-level agendas that are carefully developed, thoroughly researched in advance, and effectively implemented with built-in evaluation technologies.

Federal and provincial family policies need to be put in place to guide legislation, to deal with extant controversial issues such as pornography and therapeutic abortion, to resolve long standing issues in the equality of spouses and parents and the rights of children, to monitor and review existing programs which may have an unintended negative influence on families, and to affirm the importance of child and family well-being over the life span. These policies will both structure and enable communities to review policy and action priorities in a larger context.

3. A COMMUNITY FOCUS APPROACH TO FAMILY PREVENTATIVE SERVICES

One of the purposes of this paper is to examine the community context of family and child well-being. This section emphasizes the idea that the preventative orientation is most naturally implemented at a community specific level.

3.1 THE VALUE OF A COMMUNITY FOCUS APPROACH

The intersections between families and their society occur at the community level. It is here that they work, buy groceries, go for walks, attend movies and theatre, go to sport events, where their children go to school. It is in their community where they go to church, birth their children, and bury their loved ones. It is here where they experience disappointment, hardship, crisis, spouse and child abuse, drug addiction and other contemporary realities. The families share a kind of commonwealth - the competition between cities, the community imagery, the unique weather patterns, the particular topography and waterways, the transportation system, the local reporters in the newspapers and on television, and more importantly, where the political ramifications of provincial and federal programs are most directly experienced.

Secondly, community leadership can do what higher levels of government are unable to do, however well-founded the inaction. In the absence of informed family policies at the federal or provincial level, the community can establish its own policy and proceed to implement higher standards for day care and family-oriented policies in social services. Grass roots movements frequently evolve within neighbourhoods in support of various actions. This ground swell eventually reaches the province and, with perseverance, even the federal level. The leadership of community-level governments is closer to their constituency and therefore more subject to influence. The opportunities for volunteerism in the local community are more viable than at other levels. Volunteerism is an important part of community life, varying from the distress line, agencies for children or youth, to family life education.

Thirdly, every sub-community (neighbourhood) has ready-made community focus facilities such as schools and churches. These facilities are often under-utilized and represent ideal neighbourhood spaces for meetings, services, and programs in the interest of family well-being. Schools are eminently familiar to the family. They, unlike many other aspects of community life, are primary units of contact and association. These are places where children are dropped off and picked up daily. Too many parents, the principal and the teachers become the primary representatives of the city educational system. Schools are likewise a meeting place where families come to know each other through their children. Schools are places where special events occur, and where parent-teacher meetings are scheduled. The church, likewise (although the average family has much more limited contact and involvement) is a location of familiarity. A place where members of the community are known to gather. A place, according to Bibby (1987), where many of the inactive will gather for Easter, Christmas, baby dedications, marriages and funerals. These are locations where the community finds family focus, where through their children they find themselves linked to others.

3.2 IMPROVING FAMILY SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY

After the completion of an earlier study on family patterns in the City of Edmonton, I conducted a follow-up study of ways of improving services to families (Larson, 1980). It was my view that new studies were unnecessary. In the course of doing the first study, I had come across a multiple number of published and unpublished studies relating to family services. In total, these studies contained nearly 2500 recommendations most of which had been collecting dust for several years in city, provincial or federal book shelves. The recommendations were systematically reviewed and reduced to about 500 recommendations organized into seventeen areas of social service including:

> Family life, divorce, lone parents, day care, housing, poverty, juvenile delinquency, mental health, alcoholism and drug abuse, domestic violence, suicide, rape, family planning and abortion, child protection, social disease, handicapped children, and senior citizens.

A questionnaire was developed in which a panel of experts was asked to first rate the level of importance and to second rank order the steps with the highest priority of a subset of 6 - 15 recommendations of each area of social service. The panel of over 200 included on-line Alberta government and city social service practitioners, teachers and researchers in social work and family study, private practitioners, lawyers and church leaders, and opinion leader parents. The questionnaire was completed by 109 respondents, despite an average six hours of volunteer time. There was considerable excitement with the project, though most held out little hope that any of the recommendations would be given consideration by any level of government. Of the 537 recommendations, 135 were ranked as top priorities. The overwhelming majority of these priorities reflect a focus on prevention rather than rehabilitation. Indeed, in response to a specific question on the relative importance of prevention, 65% favoured prevention, 32% favoured both prevention and rehabilitation. One general level recommendation illustrates the basic thrust of the results, despite the individual orientation of many of the actions evaluated (Larson, 1980:387).

> "The overall improvement of services and programs relating to family life should be given first priority in all levels of the public and private sector. Preferential priority actions defined within family life and those specifically relating to family life in other areas of social service should be implemented."

The prevention focus dominated recommendations to all levels of government - city, provincial and federal, as well as to educational and religious organizations and private agencies within the city. As is well appreciated, the scope of need-based services to families in trouble is large, often beyond the fiscal capacity of either government or private community agencies. Preventative programming therefore either requires a massive increase in expenditures, or a radical reorganization of existing resources. Many believe that the long-term perspective, ie., prevention oriented policies and programs, will require fiscal restraint in rehabilitative programming in the short term, the fallout notwithstanding.

In addition, a serious review of jurisdictional issues in services to families must be undertaken in order to facilitate an overall improvement in programming. It is apparent that all levels of government should not be involved in setting policy and standards and delivering services to meet the same child and family needs. In the absence of a rationalized system of social care-giving and preventative services, several problems seem endemic including - double taxation for overlapping services (income and property taxes to meet similar family needs), excessive top-heavy administrative and bureaucratic mega-structures which tend to be self perpetuating, a focus on job entrenchment and civil servant job protection, and boundary maintenance jurisdictional paranoia. Family services should be delivered in a cooperative and non-redundant way at the point of need. There is not any sane way of ensuring a variety of essential services, integrated into a comprehensive service module, and readily accessible to the individual or family client with multiple needs, without explicit co-ordination.

3.3 SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY FOCUS AGENTS OF PREVENTATIVE SERVICES TO FAMILIES

The major thesis in a recent work by Hobbs, et.al.(1984: 272) is that people in communities working together to strengthen families should adopt the major goal of building a "competent and caring society." The authors of this work further argue that the most natural place for creating more competent and caring people is the educational system. In their judgment, the key is child care and parent education. They suggest that educational systems at the state level should establish policies and programs to build a strong community-based child care and parent education system. It is argued that government funding should be sharply increased to education on the grounds that the school is the most viable agency for preventative family education.

They may have a point. Schools are natural locations for community focus and outreach. Their grounds and structures are locations of family and child concourse. Schools, principals, and teachers are ready-made child and family influence agents. As educators, they prepare children and youth for life. At the core, education is preventative in design and purpose. Educational institutions cannot and should not program merely to ensure a good fit between what seems to be occurring in society. It would seem the role of the school must also include an explicit challenge to undesirable change, while also designing creative mechanisms for those caught, by intention or default, in unsatisfying circumstances to be directed to sources of help. The following suggestions, with some liberties, are based on the results of the panel study on recommendations to schools (Larson, 1980). To implement them within a particular community will require a radical revision of existing funding priorities.

3.3.1 Family Life Education

Although a number of schools have established "sex education" or "perspectives for living" courses for junior or senior high students, the overall focus on family life education throughout the curriculum is either underemphasized or nonexistent. It is essential for curriculum planners to introduce family content into kindergarten to Grade twelve materials, and to also offer specific family life courses. On the whole these materials should:

> Uphold the Value of Family Life. Affirm the potential and importance of the child's family, the worth and potential of the child in the classroom, help children understand the sources of hurt and potential in single parent and remarried families, teach children how to send messages and how to listen, how to talk with and positively influence parents and teach basic human values (such as kindness, generosity, patience, responsibility, forgiveness) and resist negative values (exploitation, selfishness, arrogance, intolerance).
>
> Uphold the Importance of Goals in Families. Emphasize that healthy relationships require effort and energy, the value of focusing on the positive in parents and siblings, and the meaning of commitment and goal-setting in everyday life.
>
> Encourage a Healthy View of Sexuality including the meaning of sex in relationships, responsibility, sexual respect and modesty, family planning, social diseases, people as sexual objects, and sexual assault. In an era of casual sexuality, the nonuse or misuse of contraception, abortion, teen pregnancy, teen parenthood, AIDS, the meaning of intimacy and healthy sexuality must be responsibly reviewed.

3.3.2 Training of Teachers

As community influence agents and educators, the training and certification of teachers should include more systematic emphasis in child development. Teachers should be trained in the detection and referral of children at risk (suicide, learning disabilities, abused or neglected children, children with a proneness toward behaviourial or emotional problems, etc.) and children in pain or under stress (divorce, death in family, latchkey, etc.)

3.3.3 Guidance Counselling

Most of the guidance counsellors are now assigned to senior high schools, far fewer to junior high schools. Vocational counselling is emphasized. On the whole, intervention is impossible at the secondary school level. Child and family counsellors need to be assigned to the elementary school while intervention is still a viable possibility. Counsellors at this level have a unique opportunity to work with the teachers, parents, and the children. In addition, families can be referred to relevant parent education programs while such programs are still interesting and effective.

3.3.4 Parent Participation and Education

Wherever possible, an effective way to facilitate parent education is to include parents as volunteers in classroom activities and school programs. The learning environment, along with interaction with other children, stimulates parent education and growth. In addition, as a community education focus facility it is a natural adjunct to offer parent and child education programs on a regular basis. Schools might well consider employing teachers trained in various applied parenting technologies (such as S.T.E.P.) who can earn extra money by offering such courses.

3.3.5 Child Care Assistance

The school is also a natural place to provide high quality pre-school, after-school, and day care for parents in the community. It is an ideal facility complete with school grounds and indoor exercise and sports opportunities. The child and family are able to connect with the school before the children actually attend as first graders. Again, specialized personnel are required along with parent volunteers. Students in training for child care (such as in a high school program) could be involved in these units on a work-study basis.

3.4 CHURCHES AS COMMUNITY FOCUS AGENTS OR PREVENTATIVE SERVICES TO FAMILIES

In the chapter by Bronfenbrenner, et.al. (1984:307) the role of religious institutions in community life is emphasized. It is argued that churches are "extremely salient both as sources of support and as child-rearing systems." Churches are said to be the focal point for community activities. On any given Sunday, there are more people in churches or synagogues than the total number of people who attend sporting events in an entire year

(Berger and Neuhaus, 1977:27, as reported in Bronfenbrenner, et.al., 1984). As is pointed out, however, there is little research on the role of the church in the community, either as an indicator in the assessments of community effects or as mediator of effective programming.

There are at least two unique features of the church compared to other community organizations. In contrast to the school, the local church is a private volunteer organization. Those who attend or become members do so of their own free will, although their motivations for participation likely vary from a sense of commitment, interest, need, or obligation. Second, churches are oriented to the family as a unit over the life span. "Families" go to church. The entire family is encouraged to come to the church (its worship services, Sunday school classes, and other activities). Most other organizations cater primarily to individuals. On the whole this means that churches constitute a "family of families." The leadership is typically informed about families, their structure, where they live, and their experiences with life (work, marriage, children, employment, birthdays, anniversaries, transition points and crises). Even though some churches have uncertainties about family forms that vary from the standard nuclear family on the whole, the church has adjusted to the changing family with both support and affirmation. Accordingly, the church represents an unusual and important community resource in preventative services to families. It is a private organization committed to family well-being, without official funding except through the resources donated by its adherents, and it is endowed with a credible "army" of concerned volunteers who have a sense of mission in caring for families in need. The value perspectives within the church community often vary as much as those in the community at large. As such, the local church is often a mirror of widely held community beliefs and values, even though the conduct or practice of these values falls short of church standards. Even so, theology often transcends progressive and conservative agendas in the emphasis on social justice or the removal of inequities between spouses, while also remaining true to dogma in the definitions of right and wrong in sexuality, the meaning of commitment and fidelity, and related matters.

These factors combined with the community base of the church, its underutilized facilities and the continued interest of local residents in the various ministries of the church, bodes well for an effective role in preventative family services. Co-operation and co-ordination in programming among the various community agencies (churches, schools, social service branches, etc.), both public and private, will enhance both the visibility and quality of the services offered. Such co-operation is endemic in the programs, policies and services of the B.C.

Council on the Family. Many churches are taking another look at more effective ways of ministering to families throughout the life span[3]. There is concern about education for marriage, before parenthood, and for the various stages of parenting before parents enter the stage. Education for single parents and remarried parents is a growing concern. Churches want to minister more effectively to families in crisis, families dealing with death and dying, and families dealing with stress in the various transitions and demands of living. Support networks for single parents, children of the aging, the aged themselves, and other special needs groups are being established. Counselling and referral are major roles for pastoral staff. Programming is under review due to an awareness that the church seems to splinter families when they arrive at the church door. There is a renewed emphasis on affirming and supporting family time and family activity at home and in the church. Many of these concerns and activities are in sync with community concerns in preventative programming.

It is apparent that the role of the school and the church in preventative programming, and their relative community effect in child and family well-being, among many other community variables, need to be researched in greater depth. It seems likely that community prevention will substantively reduce the incidence of child pathology.

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[3] One of the hats I wear is to write articles on ways in which the church can more effectively minister to families in contemporary society. My ideas are published quarterly in a journal called Share, a publication of the Baptist Union of Western Canada. Our denomination recently established a Family Ministries Chair at its seminary in Vancouver, British Columbia. As with many new ideas, there is resistance to reconceptualizing the nature of ministry. Although there is much concern about the family, many still cling to the old assumption that the family does okay without the support of others if its "spiritual house" is in order. This assumption is slowly giving way to a family-oriented focus in many domains of church life.

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF JOAN GLODE
The Family in the Community

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Joan Glode - Director of Micmac Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia; she negotiated a native child welfare agreement in Nova Scotia in 1985.

PRESENTATION:

The Micmac Community in Nova Scotia began in 1980 to embark on a bold endeavour - to examine and seek a solution to the flood of young people going off Reserve to non-Native foster and adoptive homes, to assist the young adults as they returned to the Reserve after years of foster care and to strengthen and support the family so that the root causes of the children going into care could be stopped. Through a process of consultation, a landmark Conference was convened at Liscombe Lodge, Nova Scotia to formulate proactive, practical measures on a variety of fronts simultaneously. These included, a Bachelor of Social work Program for Social Services Staff and an Indian Child Care Agency.

The B.S.W. Program has now graduated 7 Social Workers. Micmac Family and children's Services was incorporated in 1985 and is in the process of assuming all legislation under the Children's Services Act.

This presentation will focus on the development of these two programs and the lessons learned about the empowerment of a community through training of individuals and supporting the family.

Micmac Customary Care:

> "Years ago, the Micmac Tribal Council arranged child care or child adoption according to their own beliefs and customs. When a Micmac child was orphaned or if the parents were unable to provide such care, the child was simply given to relatives or extended family to be cared for. a child's name did not change, and there were no such things as

> termination of parental rights. The Micmacs had no secrecy about the identity of the natural parents."

This retrospective look at how child welfare was managed by the Micmac community is contained in a research project conducted by the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association in 1980/81 (Nova Scotia native Women's Association 1981, p.6). The comments are a wistful look at a simpler time when the Indian community perceived itself as having the authority and the right to make decisions for itself.

The evaluation of Native Child Welfare is well documented in Patrick Johnston's Native Children and the Child Welfare System (1983). He concludes that: "The inadequacy of the child welfare system as it now affects many Native people is of relatively recent vintage. It is a problem that has developed since the Second World War and didn't become apparent until the 1960's and 1970's. (p.1)

Until after the Second World War, Indians were less visible as most lived on Reserves or in remote communities. However, this was a time of great social change for the entire world. Many Indian men enfranchised, or as Indian people say - gave up their rights, when they joined the services, therefore, could not return to the reserve. Many others left in search of a better way of life. Following the War, a proliferation of health and social services emerged and increased attention was given to the plight of Canada's Native people. Various studies and reports suggested that extending provincial child welfare and other social services would be an appropriate way to deal wit the social problems on Reserves.

> "In 1951, major revisions to the Indian Act were introduced, including a clause that seemed to allow for the extension of provincial child welfare services. The changes, however, did not authorize additional funding to defray the cost of newly provided services, so over the ensuing years only some provincial child welfare programs were extended to residents of some reserves in some provinces." (Johnston, 1983, p.3)

The nebulous phrasing coupled with the issue of jurisdiction has led to the present diversity across the country.

The 1929 to the early 1960's, and Indian Residential School in Shubenacadie served the child welfare needs of the Indian community in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The final word is still not in about its use and effectiveness. Opinions are as different as the individuals who express them. It was regarded by some as the best thing that could have happened and by others torture, and every shade and texture between, what is clear, is that for many families, it was a source of great pain and that the loss of children created disruption to community functioning, leading to feelings of hopelessness, anger, despair and grief. The return of strangers to the community in place of lost children did not heal the hurts.

The residential school served many needs. Seen by Natives as a tool of assimilation policy, it endeavoured to eradicate the language by denying its use and to instill the work ethic by manual labour. In the process, siblings were often not permitted to talk to each other. Contact with the family was sporadic. Through the Residential school system, whose generations of young people were removed from their community with its social supports through the extended family, they were cared for physically - fed and clothed but not loved. Many of these children never learned how to parent because they experienced no parenting themselves.

The closing of the Residential School was followed in 1964 by the signing of a memorandum of agreement between Canada and Nova Scotia that stipulated that Indians living on reserves in Nova Scotia would receive the same child welfare services provided to other residents of the province. Included in these services were assessment, counselling, child protection and placement services, homemakers and day care services. The latter two services were never implemented.

In the years that followed, Provincial Social Services became active in the Reserve community and operating on the principle of the best interests of the child, as defined by the times, many Indian children were removed from the Reserves. The majority of these children were placed in white homes either as foster or adopted children.

The Indian community regarded provincial authority with increasing hostility and suspicion but they were well trained by generations of what was perceived as similar treatment.

In the early 1970's Shubenacadie Band, the second largest in Nova Scotia, began to discuss the issues and meet with the local Children's Aid and the Province. Together they developed a working paper that became a policy directive that was intended to preclude "the indiscriminate placement of Indian children in non-Indian homes." (Johnston 1983, p.4) Correspondence from John Angus MacKenzie, the Deputy Minister of the Nova Scotia Department of Social Services to Patrick Johnston, dated October 21, 1981 explains the reasoning:

> "Because of the understanding of the importance of cultural heritage to the Indian child in his developmental years,

> approval for the adoption of the Indian child with non-Indian parents will not be given unless it can be demonstrated that such a placement is in the child's best interest." (Johnston 1983, p.94)

The directive provided that a placement in a non-Indian home must be submitted to the reserve's child welfare committee for approval. When this directive was issued, the population of the Shubenacadie reserve population was approximately 600. Approximately 50 children were then in the care of the local Children's Aid.

In 1974, Nova Scotia became a pioneer in establishing a new relationship with the Indian population. Shubenacadie formalized the terms of reference of its committee which became one of the first Child Welfare Committees in Canada. Many of the original members continue to provide support and guidance to the Micmac Agency today.

Helen Martin, the founding President of the Nova Scotia Native Women's Association recalls that in 1973 or 1974 she had a series of conversations with Chief John Knockwood of Shubenacadie who expressed his concerns about children being apprehended from the Reserve. Then as she travelled about the Province she began to be approached by young people. As she describes it:

> "There was an Indian youth who came to us. There were several of them. They were looking for their background and their heritage. And they said that they had been brought up off the Reserve, and they wanted to look for their roots." (N.S. Native Women's Association 1981, p.25)

The Native Women's Association decided to find out more about the problem and applied to Secretary of State to research the issue of Indian children placed in non-Indian homes.

The report identified five areas of concern:

"1. the lack of research training in the Reserve community
2. the need for child welfare committees in the Reserve community
3. the need for specialized training in the area of Indian Child Welfare
4. the need to look at Children's Aid Society's policies as they pertain to Indians

5. the need for Indian people to take over the whole child welfare program, and to do all the work currently

> done...by the province" (N.S. Native Women's Association 1981, p.1)

Helen said that,

> "Native women then came to the realization that past suppressions of Indian culture have had a disastrous effect upon the Indian youth and children in Nova Scotia." (N.S. Native Women's Association 1981, p.4)

They took their concerns to the General Assembly of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians in 1981 and their resolution, passed unanimously set in motion both a specialized training program that became the Micmac B.S.W. program, and the Micmac Agency. Noel Doucette, the President of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians, brought together a small group of people to discuss social conditions on Reserves and to seek solutions. Included in the group was Dr. Fred Wien, the Director of the Maritime School of Social Work at Dalhousie. After months of discussion they agreed that the two organizations would sponsor a workshop on social conditions and formed a joint committee to plan the workshop and to obtain funding.

> "The workshop was intended both to define the extent and nature of the social problems more clearly, and also to identify the concrete measures that need to be taken so that conditions could be improved by the Micmac people, in a manner consistent with their values and traditions." (Moore 1982, p.4)

The timing was right. The Spallumcheen Band in British Columbia through its historic By-Law assumed exclusive responsibility for child welfare for its members in 1980. And in Manitoba, the Dakota - Ojibway Child and Family Services became the first recognized Indian-controlled child welfare agency in 1981. Sixty invited participants gathered at Liscombe Lodge in June 1987. Most of the participants were Micmac and included a cross section of Indian political leadership, health, education and social service staff, Indian and non-Indian resource persons from across Canada, and one from the United States. Out of this workshop, a number of solutions were suggested to address a variety of issues.

Two of these were the training programs for Micmac social service staff and an Indian child welfare agency. Planning committees were struck for these two projects.

For the training program, after lengthy consultation with community groups, the committee decided to adopt the BSW program of the Maritime School of Social Work and the school agreed to adapt the content and the methods of teaching to meet the needs. When the program officially began in September 1984, the Planning Committee divided, with some overlaps to form an Advisory Committee and a Curriculum Committee.

Both Committees have membership from the school, from Indian leadership, agencies whose students are in the program, and the students themselves.

The Curriculum Committee, which I chair, deals with curriculum issues and course adaptations. It interviews and recommends staff appointments to the school's BSW Committee and deals with day-to-day concerns. During the first few years, it met monthly. Since the program was intended only to provide training and skill development to existing health and social services staff, there is no ongoing admission. The program concludes in May 1990 when the last block of students graduate.

The Advisory Committee deals with policy and planning, including evaluation of the program and meets four times a year. It has representation from other schools of social work including Harvey Stalwick from the program at the University of Regina and Marlene Brant Castellano from Trent University. Guests, lecturers and visitors from other areas of the country who came to view the program and meet the Coordinator and Instructor often found themselves involved in a lively discussion of mutual issues and concerns rather than just observing. This dialogue with other schools of social work is noted by Pace and Smith as being especially helpful. (p.5)

The program has been blessed with sensitive and supportive leadership from the Directors of the Maritime School of Social Work, first Dr. Fred Wien and later by his successor, Dr. Daniel O'Brien. Non-educators like myself have sat in bemusement while our academic friends discussed the model of education that was evolving and whether it fit an andragogical or a pedagogical approach.

The planning committee for the child welfare agency took a year longer than the other committee to conclude its task. This was done on July 5, 1985 when a five year three party agreement was signed between Canada, Nova Scotia and the Chiefs of the Nova Scotia Bands. The planning committee became the first Board of Directors of the new Agency. They resigned as a group in 1987 and requested that the Chiefs assume control of the Agency due to their inability to establish meaningful dialogue with the Department of Indian Affairs.

What Have We Learned?

As a people, we have learned that it is possible to gain control of our lives, of our children and of our future. In a few short years, the Indian community, which was suffering from a breakdown in social and family structures that many believed would lead to the end of a people, has stabilized and begun to rebuild.

Dr. Clare Brant, a Mohawk Indian and Canada's only Indian psychiatrist told us at the Liscombe Lodge Workshops how he does therapy with Native people. He described it as a process involving ..."a restoration of the self. Putting the person back into the circle of their tribe, teaching them who their tribe is, what that is about, what their ceremonies and what their behaviour ought to be like and why they feel guilty about not behaving that way." (Moore 1982, p.59)

That describes the approach we have tried to follow. We recognize that there is a great deal of community healing that needs to happen. Our families - the units of the community - have been hurt and continue to feel the pain years and even generations later. We have learned that the process is as important as the product. That a consensual approach is time consuming but for a community that has only recently moved from powerlessness, and anomie, that moving too fast or trying to impose, causes blocks that could preclude further dialogue. The community has developed a sense of pride in its accomplishments. The few graduates of the B.S.W. program have been attended at their graduation by large members of family and friends who share the graduates pride and sense of accomplishment.

The development of an Indian Agency is not a happy ending because it is neither happy nor an ending. In our fourth year of operation, a flood of disclosures of family violence and child sexual abuse have begun to surface. Many of these happened years ago and were masked by misuse of alcohol and drugs, social and health problems and mental illness. New skills and knowledge are needed, but as a community we have learned that the process involves looking back to our values and traditions and outward to current therapy and practice.

In our process of growth and development in Nova Scotia and as Indian people across the country we have not been the only ones to change and adapt. Child welfare legislation across the country has and continues to change. I am pleased that in Nova Scotia a lengthy process of consultation in underway, to discuss both changes to the legislation and to improve communication.

I have two recommendations that I ask you to consider:

1. That training in cross cultural counselling be made available to staff who provide services to cultural or linguistic groups that are different from their own.

2. That there is a great need to facilitate an Inter-Provincial/Territorial system of notification, so that the appropriate Indian Agency or Band is notified when a child is taken into the care of a non-Indian Agency or can be placed back into the Indian community due to factors such as adoption disruption.

In their paper, **Native Social Work Education: Struggling to Meet the Need**, Pace and Smith say:

> "The Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Program has taken a broad interpretation of (Paulo) Freire's philosophy and encourages students to develop individual, group and societal empowerment. Individual empowerment includes personal change such as the development of self-confidence, self-esteem and pride in Native heritage. Group empowerment includes changes through cooperation, trust and task accomplishment. Finally, societal change includes changes such as agency policy..." (Pace & Smith 1988, p.9)

According to Freire's philosophy, it is the process that leads to empowerment. We are not at the end of the process. Maybe we are just starting. We have learned that it is possible and practical to work together, with our own people and with you. We have also learned that there is no one right answer and that in spite of the complex legal and jurisdictional issues, we are on the right track.

PANEL PRESENTATION OF GASTON GAUTHIER

The Family in the Community

Gaston Gauthier - Coordinator of Family Science Sector, Montreal Catholic School Commission's Department of Adult Education; and parent educator with publications addressing family functioning including family violence and the influence of television.

PRESENTATION:

Families and Empowerment

In our invitation to this national symposium, we were asked to speak about relations between families and the various levels of government. The general tone of this symposium, which favours families, suggests that we should examine these relations from the standpoint of families rather than of governments. The theme of our presentation is therefore the following: how can families improve their position when dealing and interacting with the authorities? This is a somewhat novel approach to the issue because, as a rule, it is the authorities that impose their will on families. Considering the degree of satisfaction that we feel when the "little guy" stands up to the "big guy," we are eager to explore this subject.

Difficulties soon arise, however, beginning with semantic ones; it is immediately obvious that the English "empowerment" has different connotations from the French "prise en charge;" the former strongly implies that relations between families and the authorities are primarily power-based, while the latter is more suggestive of what might be termed the responsibility of families.

Another difficulty concerns the values that many people generally associate with families. In other words, families are idealized in a way that discourages people from imagining them involved in a struggle with the various levels of government.

Lastly, there are more formal or theoretical difficulties, exemplified by those who, like Steiner, refuse to believe in the family's contribution to political life, or, more notably, in the usefulness of a family policy.[1]

In contrast, the international conference held in Tokyo in 1986 reaffirmed the family's central role in all socio-economic development, and stressed the need to examine relations between families and the various political and other authorities.[2]

That having been said, I would add that our own work with families and parents leads us to believe that, from a practical standpoint, relations between families and the authorities are clearly identifiable and sufficiently important to merit study. Our experience suggests that a description of these relations requires a multi-faceted approach, as follows:

Working with Adult Family Members:

Needless to say, efforts aimed directly at children or adolescents are important. The services that try to reach young people can certainly help them as individuals.

If, however, the goal is to strengthen the family in its dealings with the authorities, services to children, although indispensable, present certain limits. Of the family members, children are the most easily influenced and the least capable of resisting the authorities' will. Because of their age, they are the least capable of demanding explanations or responding to the authorities' actions; they can only submit to them. Moreover, services aimed at children often involve parents who are weak or underprivileged, and are intended to make up for the weaknesses and faults that, rightly or wrongly, are ascribed to them.

Given the above, these services can scarcely be expected to strengthen families. Indeed, these weaknesses, and above all our impression of them, may underline or even indirectly increase the political power of the organizations that provide these services. The more convinced we become of families' needs and weaknesses, the more we stress the need to increase services. As a result, families will continue to appear, in the eyes of the authorities and powerful groups, weak, in need of aid and unable to act.

Moreover, since the empowerment of families depends on their internal strengths, agencies that deal directly with children are not well placed to reach the family members who have the greatest maturity and who exert the greatest influence, namely, the parents and other adults who set the tone in the family and give it unity. Clearly, if the goal is to empower the family, greater importance must be given to the parents' role and contributions.

Lastly, it must be realized that the adults in families have qualities that make them better suited for a dialogue with the authorities. These adults--they are generally the mothers and fathers--are strongly motivated by love for their children, and extremely powerful but frequently under-estimated force. One of their qualities is their ability to come together in the pursuit of concrete objectives, and this prepares them for group action. They also understand time. Parents are magnificently disposed to undertake long-term actions; indeed, their patience in this area seems infinite. Last but not least, adult family members have the right to vote. This right is not under-estimated by any politician, and may thus help families in the struggle for empowerment.

Education and Prevention

Empowering families also implies giving priority to the education and prevention efforts that will benefit them. For us, this is not an imaginary solution, but one that could have significant impact. Our work to educate parents and families has brought forth issues that have been useful in developing a family policy in Quebec and that have thus contributed in a very explicit and concrete way to the political strength of families.

Of course, this is not to say that curative or palliative efforts are not important. They continue to have their place. It is simply that, if the goal is to empower families, new emphasis must be given to their education.

For this goal to be achieved, however, the education of parents and families must meet certain conditions. It must transcend the information that they receive and the pedagogy to which they are subjected, and it must not stop at a description of the services available to them. Distributing brochures is not enough.

This education must enable families to focus on issues that concern them and that inspire them to learn more or to find solutions to their problems. Families come together, share information with each other, tell each other about their goals, and engage in peer learning. The experience enables them to emerge from their isolation and make friends. They do not find easy answers or quick solutions to problems in their children's education. Instead, they listen to each other and learn from one another, engaging in a process of mutual assistance that is both demanding and rewarding and that provides them with an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of their lives. Our experience in this area suggests that parents and families do not under-estimate the effort required to clarify important issues and values.

This approach to family education can be applied with equal effectiveness to help families considered weak and in difficulty and to bring families and parents together in order to deal with social problems. What is important is that families face these problems rather than resign themselves to them.

As you may already have guessed from the above, we consider this type of family education to be beneficial only if provided directly to the parents and adults in families.

Lastly, the education of families provides many other opportunities for their empowerment, and there are works available that may help to understand the nature and metis of this process.[3] For its method, Paulo Freire's approach is worth studying.[4] Our own experience in this field, which dates back about fifteen years, is described in a work entitled "Le Projet Relation parent-enfant, un folie qui dure."[5]

Families' Point of View

To foster the empowerment of families, it is important to see things from their point of view. By this, I do not mean listening to one or more of the opinions that they may express, but actively viewing matters as they would, considering their interests and desires, and encouraging them to make their own views known.

This point of view, I would stress, becomes much more obvious when families express it by coming together and taking a common stand. It acquires prominence when, while taking into account the interests of the individuals who make up the family, we also consider the interests of the family as a social unit.

Too often, however, the families' point of view is not expressed; too often, someone else speaks in their place; and, too often, their point of view gives way to other points of view and other interests. Families cannot take their place when, instead of letting them speak, we call on the "human sciences" to speak for them.

The current arrangement, whereby families are seen as the consumers of services that a variety of agencies are expected to provide for them, is likely to foster dependence and passiveness in their dealings with the authorities, or at least a one-way relationship between them and the authorities. Being better educated, better informed and more articulate than many families, the representatives of these authorities have no difficulty imposing their views, and even their will, on families. For example, we know of one working-class family whose child was taken away and placed in the care of a better educated foster family that belonged to the same social class as the professional in charge of the case.

An essential aspect of the point of view that we wish to promote is cognitive in nature and involves a change in the way we think about families. It was to promote such a family-based approach that family agencies in Quebec worked so hard to ensure that the province's family policy incorporated efforts to "think family."

We must develop an approach that takes into account not only relations within families, but also relations that families as social units establish with their environment and with other social units, agencies and institutions. Such a shift in attitude is all the more necessary because today many theories do not even mention families--or do so in a negative way--and many relations, agreements and laws are made without taking families into account. This new attitude toward families would make it possible to refer to parents and families in positive and respectful terms, thus facilitating their empowerment, whereas negative designations obstruct it.

Thinking with, by and for families requires special efforts and a new type of research. It is an approach that must be developed on the basis of the most complicated and emotionally charged human relations that we know of. Some methods are more suited to the task than others. We have found action research and peer learning to be especially effective.

It is to be hoped that in the long term this family-based approach can help to establish a new dialogue between families and experts and academics from various disciplines, as well as the authorities.

Action by Families

The empowerment of families is more difficult to attain if we are content to view families as consumers of services provided and administered by others. This empowerment requires rather the pursuit of forms of action that families themselves are best able to undertake.

Our experience suggests that when families initiate action, this action quickly acquires new dimensions. For example, it is quite natural for families with growing children to start an exchange of clothing, while in other, non-family-based groups, an exchange of views seems to suffice.

Here is another example. It is striking to see how family action affects celebrations. In family-based gatherings, a celebration, whatever the occasion, is far more than a form of group recreation. It is a communal gathering that families seek and that is characterized by a pooling of everyone's efforts.

It is also interesting to note that, when families engage in this type of activity, they develop a desire to formalize their association by designating a physical location as their meeting place. The Maison des parents in Montreal expresses, in its own way, this desire on the part of parents to have a place where they can meet.[6]

The empowerment of families also requires the emergence of a leadership specifically suited to them. Families need to find their own leaders, who must be recruited and trained patiently. The process consists in identifying, over the course of many family-based activities, people who are "natural leaders," that is, parents who seem to have the confidence of others, and giving them the opportunity to spur the others to action. Since empowerment means that families will often have to appear before influential groups and government authorities, they clearly must have leadership. In its own way, our Natural Leaders project is trying to accomplish this.

Lastly, we would point out that the various efforts to promote action by families are based on the social and economic contribution that families, on their own and through their own resources, make to community life, and that the goal must be to see that this contribution is acknowledged. What families give to the community far exceeds what they receive from it. It is important to realize this.

Families and Partners

Families alone do not have the means to empower themselves, and mutual help is not enough. They require partners and allies.

It is citizens that families should seek as partners. An ongoing search for dialogue and co-operation between families and citizens is of great strategic importance to the empowerment of families.

Consider the strength that a group of families will have if it can enlist the support of public opinion or a local newspaper. There are a number of issues which are important to families--children's safety, for example--on which families can rely on the support of the citizens.

Families should also strive to obtain the co-operation of professionals and administrators sympathetic to their cause. It is not up to the families, however, to come to the rescue of failed systems and administrations that were put in place in their absence or without consulting them. Similarly, families should not waste their time trying to answer to these experts, who do not believe in the family or who have already concluded that the family is dead.

Families must watch social developments closely, even those that do not seem to concern them, since in many respects families are in symbiosis with their environment. Families are frequently excluded from issues that concern them because they rely too much on appearances. They can avoid being excluded in this manner by co-operating with their partners and allies.

Families and Community

Isolated from one another, families cannot aspire to joint action and even less to their empowerment. Friendship and mutual

aid between families is of capital importance to them in meeting their own needs and empowering themselves.

I would add, however, that empowerment obliges families to work harder to improve their position in the community, and to reach out to their community.

The empowerment of families entails recognition of both the family's contribution to community life and the community's contribution to the family.

Families bring to communities the experience of deep and lasting relationships; a sense of what the important issues and values are; an awareness that families constitute the basic building blocks of society; issues concerning life and death; the demands and limits of kinship; the bond between grandparents and grandchildren; parent-child relationships, their remarkable duration, and the great pain and joy they often bring. In some fundamental ways, families have a place in most communities and identify with them; in other ways, they are distinct from them.

Communities in turn bring to families the experience of non-family ties and communal traditions; a sense of belonging to a larger group; the opportunity to establish ties with a greater number of people than is possible within the family; relations that are more flexible and of a different quality; and different ways of experiencing time.

In some way, the empowerment of families tends to assume community proportions, especially in the existing cross-cultural framework, in which action by and with families frequently draw a positive response from the various ethnic communities.

Families and Television

The empowerment of families cannot be discussed without considering the questions that television viewing is raising in the minds of an increasing number of people and groups.

We can no longer under-estimate the importance of the staggering fact that families, on average, spend more than 20 hours a week watching television, a figure that some studies put at twenty-five hours per week.

The important thing in this respect is not what television shows, or the content of the programs, but rather the behaviour of the families as they engage in this absorbing and continuous activity.

Curiously, this behaviour, which is so easily observable, is rarely studied and even less often questioned. While a great deal is said about television stations' ratings and programs, very little attention is paid to the viewers themselves, and even less to the way in which families experience television. Very few consider it a force with which the family must contend within the home, while many, in contrast, claim that it has a liberating effect.

Yet--how can we talk of the empowerment of families without taking into consideration this viewing experience, in which families spend most of their spare time? Is this empowerment possible if the vast majority of families are instead occupied with the simulations presented by television? If empowerment requires families to engage in conscious actions, meetings, consultations, solidarity and reflection, the viewing experience plainly has little to contribute to it.

To delve more deeply into the issue, if families want to be empowered, they must regain control of "first or dominant symbols or meanings." During the viewing experience, families, without realizing it, allow others to convey such first symbols to them, and are transformed by the effect of these symbols. They become spectators or actors. They become imitations of families, and their life becomes theatre.

Yet, as Shakespeare said somewhere, "When life becomes theatre, the child disappears." In other words, when life becomes theatre, adults and their families become a blur and vanish, and children cannot be born or exist. A study that we conducted in 1983, entitled "Television et crise" identifies television viewing as one of the principal causes of the West's declining birthrate.[7]

Since families believe that their viewing experience is liberating, when in reality it dominates them, their empowerment may be hindered.

There is no doubt in our minds that the empowerment of families cannot be fully achieved unless families acquire a new understanding of their viewing experience and regain control of the symbols that dominate their lives.

Lastly, although the empowerment of families is a complex undertaking that depends on a variety of factors and may give rise to protests from several interest groups, it holds great promise. Families recognize the need for it, and, given the opportunity, will join forces and mobilize. Experience tells us, moreover, that the empowerment of families will make it possible to tackle other, seemingly insoluble, problems.

In its own way, therefore, this empowerment will also benefit the individual and the community.

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PANEL PRESENTATION OF LINDA MACLEOD

Serving Vulnerable Families

Linda MacLeod - freelance writer, policy analyst and researcher. She is author of Wife Battering in Canada, The Vicious Circle and Battered But Not Beaten: Preventing Wife Battering in Canada.

PRESENTATION:

Good morning family members and members of the large societal family working to stop wife abuse, child abuse and elder abuse. I am happy to have the opportunity to talk to you today because I think we are on the brink of real change, a real breakthrough in the realization of our shared goal to stop woman abuse.

In just ten years, as a society, we have accomplished so much.

- The number of transition houses and other shelters which help women who are battered and their children has grown from 78 to over 300 between 1979 and 1989.
- We now have over 100 counselling programs for men who batter.
- We have made a strong statement that our society will not tolerate wife abuse, by being the first nation in the world to adopt nation-wide policies directing police to charge men who batter their wives.
- The growth of coordinating committees attests to the fact that we are beginning to work together across disciplines.
- Governments across Canada have kept this issue on their political agendas since 1981 ... an astounding length of time for which both policy makers and advocates should be congratulated.
- And we have made real progress in raising public awareness. People no longer doubt that wife abuse is a widespread

problem. Interest in this issue has grown in many spheres. The general public knows wife abuse is a serious problem and accepts the need for change to address it.

And yet, through all the progress we've made, have come nagging questions.

- Are we going in the right direction?
- Are we any closer to stopping the violence?
- Are we really speaking to the needs of women who are battered and their children?

As a society, we are experiencing a creative crisis of direction and of trust in our attempts to stop wife abuse. In the next few minutes, I hope to give you some tools to help you move beyond this crisis. I will first talk about some of the barriers to change which may be impeding the realization of our shared goal to stop the violence; and then I will suggest the central characteristics of some innovative, exciting new directions that are emerging in community families across Canada.

The topic of today's session is "Serving Vulnerable Families," but instead of discussing this topic directly, I want to ask you to focus for a few minutes on our vulnerabilities ... yours and mine, and the vulnerabilities of other people you work with in your communities. For I believe that the hard questions we face, the crisis of direction and trust we are experiencing, are not the result of a dearth of imagination. Nor are they the result of a dearth of hope. I believe it is our vulnerabilities which both fuel our energy to work so hard to stop the violence, but which also distort our attempts to stop the violence. I believe it is our vulnerabilities which have ironically pushed us into some violent, controlling ways of dealing with wife abuse and which leave us feeling that despite all our actions, we have not really progressed. And high on our list of vulnerabilities, as I see it, is our fear of wife abuse.

ARE OUR SOLUTIONS BASED ON FEAR?

Wife abuse scares us all to death. Wife abuse is frightening not only because it is so widespread that one million women in Canada each year is battered by her husband or her live-in lover. It is frightening not only because so many of these women are repeatedly brutalized by their husbands, many disabled permanently, and some killed (78 in 1988). It is frightening not only because up to 50% of the women admitted to psychiatric hospitals for depression may in fact be battered women. It is frightening not only because the children of these women are more likely to be abused psychologically and/or physically.

Wife abuse scares us because it crushes the image of safety and harmony that so many of us embrace when we think about the family. Wife abuse frightens us because it makes us question our assumptions about men and women, about marriage, about sexuality and its relationship to violence. Wife abuse frightens us because it dredges up painful memories of fearful nights. Wife abuse frightens us because it brings the spectre of injury, pain and death into our homes. Wife abuse leaves us feeling that there is no safe place. That we can't plan for the future. That the family cannot provide a haven from the storms of our daily lives. Our knowledge of wife abuse leaves us feeling that there is no-one and nothing we can trust. Wife abuse leaves us wondering if we can even trust ourselves. Through wife abuse, we are left questioning our own vulnerabilities. We are brought face to face with our own proximity to violence. We are forced to admit to ourselves that violence could be part of our own lives, that we all have the potential to be violent. That we all have the potential to be a victim. And this scares us.

SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS THROUGH FIGHT OR FLIGHT

We bring this fear and our own vulnerabilities to our attempts to stop violence. Some of our past efforts to stop the violence against women across Canada, despite the benefits that these efforts have undoubtedly brought about, have reflected these fears and vulnerabilities. Our future efforts, if they are to be effective in stopping the violence, must recognize our fears, expose our vulnerabilities, build on the shared humanity which they reveal, and help strengthen community, national and global families, not only individual family units.

When we are scared, as you all know, our bodies prepare us for "fight or flight." Perhaps we have listened only to our bodies when dealing with our fear of wife abuse, and have too often adopted fight or flight postures to deal with this problem. We have dealt with wife abuse viscerally instead of promoting solutions which not only speak to our fear and to our visceral reactions, but which also try to marry our physical reactions to an understanding of violence against women and the reasons for our particular societal reactions to this violence.

FIGHT:

We have "fought" wife abuse by looking for strong, forceful ways to stop it. We have "fought" wife abuse by using the strong arm of the law to stop the violence. Now in saying this, I am not suggesting that wife assault should not be treated like a crime, because it is a crime. But have we invested too many expectations in the ability of the criminal justice system to stop the violence?

Some people working within the justice system are now speaking of the unanticipated consequences of applying the heavy hand of the law to such a complex problem. They are worried that we may be eroding the choices of women who are battered by making of wife assault cases "special cases" in which the woman does not have the choice to drop charges as she would have were she the victim of another crime. They are worried that we are victimizing individuals in an attempt to demonstrate the law's ability to orchestrate social change.

They speak as well of an unanticipated overload of cases in the courts. They speak of the inability of Crown Attorneys and Judges to spend the necessary time on these difficult cases because they are dealing with so many cases. Some even worry that women who do not want to go through the entire criminal justice system may be forced back into the closet, into the very isolation that we, as a society, tried to break when the more aggressive charging policies first came into effect.

None of these unanticipated problems suggests that we should throw out the message that wife assault is a crime, nor that we should stop prosecuting these cases as crimes. But what these questions do suggest is that we cannot "legislate" this problem away, or "charge" the problem away. Charging can only be one small part of stopping the violence.

FLIGHT:

Although our "fight" response has been strong, our "flight" response has been even stronger. Throughout the past decade, our attempts to stop the violence have led us into paths of denial, as well as fragmentation and isolation from others also working to stop violence. These tendencies have manifested themselves in various ways, some of which contradict one another, and tend to cancel out the potential gains which could be realized through different responses to wife abuse. For example:

1. We have fled from the news of wife battering often by shooting the messengers, the majority of whom are transition house workers. Even though their initial message of the extent of wife abuse has long been accepted, these workers have never been given the credibility they deserved, have been notoriously underpaid, and have not been well involved in policy deliberations and decisions. Over the past two years, transition house workers have also been the brunt of anti-feminist rhetoric in some locations, which has accused transition house workers of breaking up families and being man-haters.

2. As a society, we made the issue "safer", and more "distant" by professionalizing the issue. As a society we tried to take it away from transition house workers and other grass roots community workers to give it to "professional" psychologists and social workers, who we knew tend to "remove" the problem from our view and to deal with it privately, rather than reminding us that the problem is living right next door, or in our own homes, the way the transition house workers did. The trend continues as governments attempt to augment grass roots services doing good and needed work, with government services, without considering that they could instead build up the capacity of these grass roots services to reach more people, and so increase the breadth of community responsibility for the problem.

3. Attempts to professionalize our response to wife abuse has bred a resistance to change even among front-line workers. Too often good intentions to offer more professional services have resulted in services which do not meet the needs of women who are battered and which bury front line workers in a mountain of paper work, lead them into mazes of scheduling and persuade them to take inflexible, autocratic positions which inhibit dialogue and change.

4. And this problem goes far beyond the front-line work setting. With professionalism and institutionalization, turf battles have loomed large, and our shared concern with the problem of stopping the violence has become subsumed within the fight of "who has the right perspective", and who can-command the most funding. Fights have begun to surface within "work families" and across agencies and communities. Fragmentation has been created across ideological lines, professional lines, language lines, race, ethnic and geographic lines. This fragmentation has robbed attempts by some individuals and groups to coordinate work across groups, of their motivation and veracity.

5. In various ways, we have tried to assign the problem to someone else. For example, in some locations transition house workers have reported that they were expected to solve the problem "all by themselves." No-one else would take on responsibility for prevention or for crisis responses. They were expected to "do it all." Some governments have announced in recent years that they had done everything they could, and now it is up to the community to take cover.

6. And we have tried to isolate ourselves from the problem, to encapsulate wife abuse so that it could be cut away like a cancer. This is I believe the most dangerous trend, and a

trend that is strengthening despite all our best intentions to move toward a more holistic, preventive approach to woman abuse.

This is a trend which wants to individualize the problem, to identify people who are "prone" to being battered or to battering. The trend perhaps first surfaced publicly with books about "women who love too much." It gained credibility through men's groups who stressed anger management -- again defining one group of men as having problems controlling their anger.

This is a trend which wants to create a new breed of "multi-problem" families, families which are variously categorized as "prone to violence," "at risk of abuse" or as "vulnerable families." Now in criticizing this trend, I am not trying to say that there are no families in which the woman has a greater risk than others of being battered. For example, if her husband has a previous history of abusing his partner, if the woman is pregnant, there is a greater statistical likelihood that this woman will be abused.

What I am saying is that by creating such a label, by focusing on a small proportion of all families, we are blinding ourselves to the broader social and psychological forces which can make all of us vulnerable to violence. We are closing the door to widespread prevention by distancing ourselves from the problem. And we are depersonalizing the problem by not even recognizing that it is women and children who are at risk, not "families."

THE IMPLICATIONS OF "FIGHT" OR "FLIGHT"

By adopting "fight" or "flight" solutions to wife abuse, we have raised expectations that we will stop fragmented one-dimensional wife abuse, but we have created incomplete solutions, paths which dead-end because they don't address the source of wife abuse in our society. By adopting "fight" or "flight" solutions we have produced a crisis of direction and a crisis of trust within narrowed visions of change.

Unless we take these problems seriously, unless we question these divisive, isolating perspectives, I believe we will not overcome the impediments to change we are currently experiencing. Unless we learn from these "dead ends," we will realize further "progress" on the backs of transition house workers and other front-line workers. Unless we learn to trust and respect one another and to develop directions which celebrate diversity of perspective and action, we will develop so-called "solutions" despite the women, children and men we are trying to help, not FOR them. We are creating solutions without asking: "Would I use this program? Would I want my family to go through the lack of dignity, insensitivity and secondary victimization which so many existing initiatives still perpetuate."

THE POSITIVE ENERGY OF "CARING TOO MUCH":

But through all this doubt, distrust, discouragement and dead-ending are some very courageous attempts to look at new directions. The caring and hope to end the violence that we all feel can overshadow the fear we have of dealing with wife abuse if we will let it. I want to end this presentation with some positive directions, initiatives people are taking, ideas people are developing ... some new, some old, but all attempts to build on our wealth of caring and hope.

These approaches have a number of characteristics in common ... characteristics which I think are essential if we are really to stop the violence.

1. These approaches reveal a willingness to stretch our existing systems ... not to overthrow them, but to build with the tools we have ... to "push the edge" as Maggie Hodgson said in a speech last winter.

2. These approaches are based on a recognition that we all have a responsibility for stopping wife abuse. They reveal an acceptance that wife abuse is not the property of easily identifiable "individuals with problems" or of "vulnerable families," that prevention is not just the job of police and transition house workers. We all have a responsibility in our professional and private lives for stopping the violence.

3. These approaches are built on the recognition that we are all vulnerable to abuse. We may not all be physically abused in our lives, but we have all been violated at some time in our lives by the control of someone over us. We share a human vulnerability to violation, and we share a human vulnerability to assert control over someone less powerful than ourselves. As a result we may all inflict psychological or physical violence on another, and we may all be the victim of someone else's control over us.

4. These approaches are based on an understanding that wife abuse is linked to other forms of violence against women and children ... social violence as well as personal violence ... the violence of poverty, of homelessness, of discrimination, of inadequate services.

5. These approaches reflect an acceptance that no one agency,

no one perspective, and no one initiative can stop the violence.

6. These approaches are based on the recognition that we must tailor our programs to individual communities and ensure that the programs are community-based.

7. These approaches respect and respond to the experiences and perspectives of women who are abused, their children and their husbands.

And so let me end by listing a few innovative approaches to stopping the violence, which I believe are rooted in the kind of understanding reflected in the characteristics I have just summarized.

- One northern community launched a major community-wide campaign not just against wife abuse, but against all violence in their community. They effectively started a kind of comprehensive "neighbourhood watch" whereby they would each take responsibility for stopping violence where they saw or suspected it.

- Businesses are becoming increasingly interested in helping to prevent wife abuse. For example, in some communities, businesses and even individuals have "donated" a room to a transition house. Under this arrangement, the "donor" assumes the financial responsibility of furnishing and upkeep of one room in the transition house over one year or more. As another example, a representative of Avon recently made a presentation at the National Forum on Family Violence and expressed an interest in taking some responsibility for stopping the violence against women.

- The artistic community is playing an expanded role in public education. A significant number of theatre groups have developed and present plays and theatre workshops to help raise awareness and understanding of wife abuse.

- The transition house in one community started a second-hand clothing store to provide clothes free of charge for women who came to the transition house and their children, to make money to help support the transition house and to provide some job training for some of the women who came to the house.

- Judge Porter in Hinton, Alberta, has used sentence adjournment occurring in one month intervals over a two year period per case to combine the strength and influence of the courts with an extensive counselling and protection program for each member of the immediate and even the extended family.

- Men's clubs are also accepting responsibility for change. The Lyon's Institute for the Prevention of Family Violence has been established in Alberta to undertake public education and research in the areas of woman, elder and child abuse.

- The Interdisciplinary Project on Family Violence, a project co-sponsored by ten national professional associations and aimed at improving service through an interdisciplinary approach, has recently published the findings from their first phase in a booklet entitled "The Other Side of the Mountain: Working Together on Domestic Violence Issues." This document looks at the need for interdisciplinary approaches to domestic violence. It looks at the barriers to creating such interdisciplinary approaches and looks at ways to improve interdisciplinary development. The second stage of the project is scheduled to begin in September.

- In some larger communities, to enable houses to provide needed child assessment and counselling services, a number of houses have got together and have hired a psychologist among them who travels from house to house training staff and providing counselling to children.

- Churches are taking an increasingly active role in providing information and support for women, children and men living in homes where the woman is abused. The Church Council on Justice and Corrections recently gave these efforts a creative push with their production of a multi-media kit entitled "Family Violence in a Patriarchal Culture: A Challenge to Our Way of Living."

- There are increased attempts to question our ways of responding to wife abuse. For example, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women held a two day "think tank" for twelve women across Canada to brainstorm about innovative ways we can understand and respond to wife abuse from women's perspectives. The National Association Active in Criminal Justice last winter held a workshop to explore how the justice system could better respond to wife abuse.

- There are attempts in some aboriginal communities to respond to woman abuse as a community, in a non-adversarial way, but in a way that encourages the person who has abused another to take responsibility for his or her actions.

- Some transition houses have made arrangements with local schools to send teachers into the transition house for the older children staying there, so that the child will not have to adjust to the potential trauma of attending a new school for the brief period of time she or he is at the transition house.

- There is a growing attempt to combine outreach, preventive and crisis services in an effort to stop the violence. For example, I understand that our host province has proposed a constellation of family support programs to lessen the risk of violence or abuse, to provide "street front" centres where a woman could receive training, life skills programs and employment assistance, to offer parenting education programs and to coordinate available shelter alternatives.

- The Chief Crown Attorney in Ottawa has suggested that we use our existing pre-trial mechanism, but stretch it to ensure that it is used more often in wife assault cases, and that the victim and offender are present at this pre-trial to help expedite wife assault cases and to ensure that the women's voice can be heard early in the proceedings. Within this model, community support workers, including such people as transition house workers, counsellors in programs for men who batter, advocates for the women and/or children, and workers in drug and alcohol treatment programs, would be present in the court house and could be called into the pre-trial to offer advice about community support and the availability of needed services.

- There is increased pressure to remove the men from their homes, not the women and children in wife assault cases. Jim Clark, recently retired from the Atlantic Police Academy, has written a paper arguing that men who assault their wives can and should be removed from the home, despite claims to the contrary.

- Self-help and mutual aid groups are beginning to form around the problem of wife battering and are a particularly viable way of providing support, particularly in rural areas. In the far north, a variation on this theme has been developed. A telephone support group, spanning thousands of miles, has helped some women who are battered in the very far north deal with their problems and share their experiences.

- There is increased interest in creating informal, neighbourhood street-front centres for women, for children and for men. These non-stigmatizing, community centres would be a place where individuals could get information, meet friends, and seek out and receive emotional support.

- And there is growing interest in community development as a means to reduce violence. In the Atlantic Provinces, there are at least two public housing complexes in which the residents are working together to create community solidarity, to reinforce pride in their community, to provide their neighbours with more tools to pursue a better life through retraining and esteem enhancement, and to stop all forms of violence.

Many of these programs are embryonic only and deserve to be evaluated before we can assess their efficacy. However, these initiatives reveal a growing interest in stopping the violence, a growing willingness for a much broader number of people in our communities to share responsibility for the solutions and an openness to see violence and its solutions in new ways which do not promote divisiveness and fragmentation.

CONCLUSION:

We have come a long way in one decade toward raising public awareness of wife abuse, toward creating crisis programs to help abused women and their children, and also toward understanding the problems of stopping the violence. The challenge before us now is to applaud our successes, but to avoid romanticizing our responses as straight-line progress. The challenge before us now is to learn from our mistakes, not to be discouraged by them, or to deny them to "save face." The challenge before us is to embrace the fear we all experience around wife abuse, and to use this fear to build solutions based on our shared vulnerability and caring. The challenge before us is to accept that we cannot erase wife abuse by defining it as "someone else's problem," for the diminishment of an individual diminishes a whole community. The challenge before us is to create community, regional and national families of people, working to stop the violence.

I want to end with a reminder proposed by a woman who has been battered for years by her husband.

"For years, I figured there was no way I could ever find a way to stop the violence in my life. Everyone I went to for help wanted to control me in their own ways. I was drowning in 'kindness.' I was being bruised by 'what was good for me.'

I say to those people, I don't want your sympathy, I don't want your theories on my life. Give me some understanding, some friendship, but above all give me some dignity and I will build a life for myself without violence."

PANEL PRESENTATION OF MAGGIE HODGSON

Serving Vulnerable Families

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Maggie Hodgson - Carriere Indian, Executive Director, Necchi Institute (on drug and alcohol education), Edmonton. She is advisor to government on mental health and family violence; Chairperson, Alberta Advisory Committee on Native Child Welfare; and co-author of The Spirit Weeps on sexual abuse.

PRESENTATION:

In 1850, a group of Hope Elders held a ceremony. In that ceremony, they were told the following:

"Our people are in our midnight and we will come into our daylight when the Eagle Lands on the Moon. When the Eagle Lands on the moon, we will start on our road to be world leaders."

What does that prophecy mean? For us to journey into day, first we have to look at yesterday.

As native people, some elements of our midnight has been the Treaties, giving up land, our Indian ceremonies being outlawed, small pox killing two thirds of our population in the early 1900's. The final act of our midnight was the removal of children from their homes and being placed into residential schools.

If I was to take the people from the first five rows that you were to assimilate into another culture. I will take all your grandparents, your parents and you out of your community from age five to age fifteen and each generation will speak Japanese. You will not be allowed to practice your religion or see your families for 10 months of the year. I will introduce you to a "better" culture. I may call you names, abuse you and you will know I'm doing it for your own good. At the end of 70 years of doing that, I will promise you, you can return to your communities to conduct your own affairs. Think of what that would do to your Canadian culture, language and religion.

There were some good results. Some of our people successfully assimilated and became contributing members of society. However, they were the minority.

Emile Durkheim, a sociologist, once said, if you take the values out of a society and were unsuccessful in injecting new values, you have a potential of the state of anomie setting in with hopelessness, helplessness and suicide.

Anomie in our community was prime ground for alcoholism, drug addiction and family violence to set in and it did result in many of our community becoming very heavily involved in substance abuse.

Remember, the end of the prophecy said, "WE WILL COME INTO OUR DAYLIGHT WHEN THE EAGLE LANDS ON THE MOON!. In 1969, when the astronauts landed on the moon, the message they sent back to earth was "The Eagle Has Landed!.

Our old people knew a turn of events were in store for our people. The week they landed on the moon was the time when the first Native Alcohol Treatment program opened up run by Natives. Native Treatment and Alcohol Education programs funded by the federal and provincial governments and appointed by our own people have been catalysts for rebuilding culture, community and the spirit of our people.

Examples of this were in the early 1970's. There was a minority of our people who were in recovery programs. We recently had a sober pow-wow in Edmonton and we had 3,000 sober Indians sharing that event. In Alberta alone, we have 13 treatment, detox and halfway houses and 29 prevention and after-care programs operated by Natives for Natives. In 1970, we had NONE. We have trained 2,500 Native people as counsellors for our communities in Alberta.

One community where we have conducted addictions prevention and intervention training, has moved from 100% alcoholism to 95% sobriety since 1974.

Where did that community's social change start? It started with a child saying, "I do not want to live with you anymore, being left alone, I'm going to live with Grandma".

Her parents went to treatment and her dad decided to run for Chief. He worked to develop social policy by creating a supportive environment in which people could respond to intervention. He had all the bootleggers on reserves charged, including his own mother. He had an alcoholic priest evicted from the reserve. They sent people for treatment in groups of two or three so they could return to support one another. When those clients returned, they found the community had cleaned their house. Those returning clients had two choices - either get a job or do volunteer work to help others. If some people chose not to go to treatment, they placed them on a voucher system. They had family catalysts encourage their extended family to go to treatment.

They conducted intensive personal growth sessions, life skills and they brought our training program in to re-develop or re-open their people. They had everyone attend these programs, the elders, parents and young. They were rebuilding community.

In 1982, they had 95% sobriety, with a drop from a death per week in 1974 to one a year in 1982. They have only had one suicide since 1980. They had young and parents attending university.

However, in 1985, one of their Band members who worked at the school was charged with child sexual abuse. They supported him to go into therapy. They called a community meeting to discuss the disclosure and decided they wanted more information on the topic and they had to do more planning as there were other victims.

I conducted the workshop with a psychologist, an Elder, and an educator. We assisted them in setting up a peer support system through weekly meetings for the survivors (adult). Their survivor's group grew over the next three years.

That group has weekly survivors meetings and they set up a children of alcoholics group. They have set up a young people's drum group.

An example of how violent this community used to be with the young. One young woman was first raped at age five. She was raped again at age 12 on the way home from school. Her assailants were four men. She was later raped at age 15 by four men. She is now an adult, and in therapy.

They intervened on a teenage suicide pact and brought in a therapist to work with their many grieving issues. They realized the anger directed at government, band council and each other was grieving blocked and turned inward.

They set up a two-week co-dependency treatment program at their band hall. They realized one of the reasons people were not reporting violence was because they were untreated co-dependents and were still protecting people who were dysfunctional.

They accessed funding under the medicine chest section of the Indian Act through Medical Services and Non-insured Benefits Program and through Crimes Compensation. They did this on a fee for service agreement. They accessed three therapists to work with their groups and families.

They had four of their men charged with sexual abuse and they pleaded guilty without a trial. One of those men was an Elder. Some of our people believe we must respect our Elders. They interpret that to mean we do not report them when they are perpetrators because we love them too much. This community understood, "To respect means we have faith they can be treated and be held accountable for their actions."

They organized a coordinated process where the police calls a community support team for the victim and perpetrator after the police have conducted an investigation. The police now coordinate their investigation with Band Social Workers. They have requested and were granted permission for their family violence sentencing and trials to be held on reserve.

The Judge and Crown Prosecutor can experience community support for the victim and family. They can see and hear of extended family of up to 40 people being in treatment together.

They have traditional ceremonies, which includes sweat lodge ceremonies as part of their community healing.

They have charged the priests who perpetrated on young boys in residential school. Those young boys (some) are the young men who are being charged now. So they are holding the Institutions' staff accountable for the damage done to their community members.

They have all their band employee caregivers in treatment for having being victimized during their young years. They believe you must be well yourself to assist others.

They have just had a 10 day seminar for 40 communities on family violence. At that session, two men stood up and said, " I want to go to make a statement to the police, I am a perpetrator and I want to go to treatment." Imagine that - what a guantum leap.

The key is those children, the moms, the grandparents and the perpetrators know they can be in therapy or before the courts without being judged or shamed in the process. They will receive support for treatment or support through the court process.

They have had young men confess crimes of raping grandmothers during the drinking years. Those young men are not in treatment. These are all done within the existing funding structure of both the federal and provincial programs.

This courageous community is in a great deal of pain. They know that courage is fear with a prayer attached to action. They have courage.

Another Elder said, "Our greatest strength is potentially our greatest weakness". In our community, our greatest strength is our extended family system. If we use that energy to suppress disclosure of violence, it is our greatest weakness. If we use it to help, support, create and heal, it can remain our greatest strength.

Ladies, Gentlemen and Elders, that is one story of how "The Eagle has landed and we are starting to come into our daylight."

PANEL PRESENTATION OF DOUGLAS J. BESHAROV

Serving Vulnerable Families

Douglas Besharov - L.L.M., J.D., Resident Scholar, the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. He is author of numerous books and publications, including Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect: Policy and Practice; and was editor of Child Abuse and Neglect Law: A Canadian Perspective.

PRESENTATION:

VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect

by Douglas J. Besharov*

Each year, about 1500 children die in circumstances of suspected abuse or neglect in the United States. Nationwide, there are an estimated one million abused and neglected children in the U.S., from all social and economic classes - from the top to the bottom. According to the most recent incidence study funded by the U.S. government, about 300,000 are physically abused, another 140,000 are sexually abused, and 700,000 are neglected or otherwise maltreated. (Note 1) It's easier to recite these huge figures off the tongue than it is to face what these figures mean to each of us personally and to all of us as a whole.

Child abuse and child neglect are not new problems. They were, however, long hidden problems. Only in the last 15 years has the plight of these children -- the victims of physical attack and deprivation -- begun to receive public exposure.

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*Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. First director, U.S. National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (1975-1979).

We all pay the price of a young child's suffering. Trapped in a harsh and terrible childhood, these children often grow up to be socially destructive -- to vent on others the violence and aggression their parents visited upon them. Many who are abused as children abuse their own children. The abuse of one generation becomes the heritage of the next. Thus, unless the cycle is broken, there is a recurring and continuing family heritage of abuse.

We must take compassionate, firm steps to improve the plight of these children. Otherwise, we consign them to a life of continuing peril and deprivation. And we consign our community to a future of aggression, drug abuse and violence. As New York Family Court Judge Nanette Dembitz rightly said: "The roots of crime in the streets is neglect of children."

After begin ignored for so long, the plight of abused and neglected children has become the subject of widespread professional and public concern. The "battered child" has moved from the back pages of professional journals to the front pages of mass circulation newspapers. Daily, there are additional news articles, television and radio programs, and community meetings, not to mention professional conferences, on the subject. More and more people want to do "something about child maltreatment.

As a result, there has been major progress in our ability to protect abused and neglected children and to assist their families. All 50 states now have child abuse reporting laws. Specialized "child protective agencies" have been established to receive reports (usually via highly publicized hotlines) and then to investigate them. In many places, health, social service, education and law enforcement agencies or individual professionals now see themselves as jointly, not separately, responsible for protecting children and, wherever possible, preserving and strengthening their families. New resources have been identified, useful family support systems have been tried, and some simplistic definitions and solutions have been discarded at last. Statistics, definitions, and procedures are being standardized and upgraded. More concretely, the quality of child abuse and neglect services provided by the States has been greatly improved.

There now exists a basic infrastructure of laws and agencies to protect children -- and it has made a difference. Many thousands of children have been saved from death and serious injury. The best estimate is that, over the past twenty years, child abuse deaths fell from over 3,000 a year (and perhaps as many as 5,000) to about 1500 a year. In New York State, for example, within five years of the passage of a comprehensive reporting law which also mandated the creation of specialized investigative staffs, there was a 50 percent reduction in child fatalities, from about 200 a year to under 100. (Note 2) Ruth and Henry Kempe, well known leaders in the field, report that: "In Denver, the number of hospitalized abused children who die from their injuries has dropped from 20 a year (between 1960 and 1975) to less than one a year."(Note 3)

And yet, in almost every community, there are inadequacies, breakdowns and gaps in the child protective process. Reports are increasing faster than agencies can handle them, yet detection and reporting remain haphazard and incomplete; protective investigations are often backlogged or poorly performed; and suitable treatment programs are almost non-existent for the majority of families needing them. Too often, the only treatment alternatives available to child protective agencies are infrequent -- and largely meaningless -- home visits or overused, and sometimes abusive foster care.

Studies indicate that as many as 25 to 45 percent of the children whose deaths were suspected of being caused by child abuse or neglect were previously known to the authorities.

At the same time that many seriously abused children go unprotected, there is an equally serious problem that further undercuts efforts to prevent child maltreatment: Child protective agencies are being inundated by "unfounded" reports. Depending on the community, as many as 65 percent of all reports are closed after an initial investigation reveals no evidence of maltreatment. (Note 4) This is in sharp contrast to 1975, when only about 35 percent of all reports were unfounded. (Note 5)

Besides being unfair to parents, the flood of unfounded reports is overwhelming the limited resources of child protective agencies. For fear of missing even one abused child, workers perform extensive investigations of vague and apparently unsupported reports. Even when a home visit of an anonymous report turns up no evidence of maltreatment, they usually interview neighbours, school teachers, and day care personnel to make sure that the child is not abused.

Thus, we still face enormous gaps between what needs to be done to protect children and what is being done:

We need to upgrade reporting practices, child protection agencies, and courts to ensure the immediate protection of all endangered children.

We need to develop cost effective treatment approaches capable of breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect.

We need to protect individual and family rights to privacy and cultural diversity during the process of involuntary protective intervention.

We need to recognize and combat child abuse and neglect in residential care-giving institutions.

We need to work continuously to coordinate public and private programs related to child abuse and neglect to maximize their impact and minimize the duplication of efforts.

We need to build basic knowledge about child abuse and neglect and ensure that service providers can apply the best state-of-the-art knowledge to improve their programs.

We are witnessing the beginning -- but only the beginning -- of what must be a sustained international effort to understand the origins of child maltreatment and help alleviate them. The recognition, reporting, investigation, treatment, and prevention of child abuse and neglect must be accorded a priority in our human services system which it does now not receive.

NOTES:

1. Sedlak, Andrea J., (December 1987) Study of National Incidence and Prevalence of Child Abuse and Neglect, Westat, Inc. prepared for the National Centre on Child Abuse and Neglect, various reports. total number of children rounded to the nearest 100; not adjusted by population totals.

2. N.Y.S. Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services in New York State: 1979 Annual Report, Table 8 (1980).

3. R.S. Kempe and C.H. Kempe, *supra* n.35, at p.8.

4. There are no reliable national statistics on unfounded reports. The 65 percent estimate is based on the author's state-by-state analysis. *Cf*. American Association for Protecting Children, Highlights of Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting (1985), p.9, Table 2 (The American Humane Association, 1987), projecting, on incomplete data, a 58 percent unfounded rate.

5. American Humane Association, National Analysis of Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting (1976), p.11 (1978).

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF DENISE AVARD PH.D.

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Dr. Denise Avard - Vice-President,
Research and Information Services,
Canadian Institute of Child Health; and
Epidemiologist and principal author of
A Profile on Children's Health in Canada.

PRESENTATION:

THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

Introduction:

I am pleased and honoured to have been asked to speak at the Symposium About the Family. The family is possibly one of the oldest of social institutions. Though definitions of the family may vary over time and between nations, all societies have some understanding of the family unit as an important place to support, protect and nurture vulnerable children. Yet often neglected in developing our understanding of health is the role of the family.

What has the family got to do with health? A great deal! The relationship between family members, their socio-economic circumstances, their work, their personal history, all can exert a powerful influence on the experience of health and disease. Children as members of a family remain dependent on their care for many years. In turn the family shapes the experience of life and hence the experience of health and disease. The family is increasingly the source of nursing care and a source of information on health and disease. Families decide on the time when they should seek medical advice and care for the health of the children. They are the primary care practitioners. For example hospitals provide facilities for parents to be in hospital with their children. For all these reasons and more, the families feel responsible for each others health.

However, the health of children is not an exclusive responsibility of the family. There is now general agreement that it is everybody's business, and a shared responsibility. For instance health is not simply an esoteric preoccupation of the health professionals and health care system, but also incorporates the environmental factors of housing, transportation and economic well-being, to give different examples. Many aspects of an individuals lifestyles or behaviour are conducive to health. People's smoking, drinking, and risk taking behaviour may be influenced by individual choices. However, it would be simplistic to assume that these individual choices are unaffected by social, economic, and legislative factors.

In this presentation, I will summarize a number of facts depicting children's health. But, before discussing the facts and figures about children's health, I must be quite clear what I mean by health. Although I subscribe to a global concept of health which includes a range of meanings like freedom from pain, discomfort or sickness, fitness and mobility, mental and physical well-being and full membership in society, little systematic data on a number of such health indicators are available nationally.

In this review I have relied upon the following health indicators: (a) age specific mortality rate and (b) low birthweight. Traditionally, mortality has been used to measure health status because of the reliability and availability of the information. The choice of birthweight is an example of a broader approach to the definition of poor health. Low birthweight is considered to be a predictor of mortality and a sensitive measure if infant development. Moreover it carries numerous implications for maternal health. Therefore it is useful to look at the proportion of babies born with a low birthweight (< 2500 grams).

There is clearly more to health than survival and low birthweight. Unfortunately there is disappointingly little information on health indicators like diseases, disability, chronic illness, physical and sexual abuse and mental health. While the source of the problem may be summarized as a methodological one, because health is more difficult to measure than mortality, it does not mean that it is any less important and appropriate.

What is the status of the health of children in Canada? Although I will frequently use the word health in this presentation the evidence is based solely on mortality and low birthweight figures. Using trend data, you will see that we have progressed in our fight against death. However, this progress has not been sufficient to reduce inequalities in the health of the child population. There are great variations among the provinces. Not only are there regional differences, there is also evidence that people with low income are less likely to survive. Compared with non-native Canadians, Status Indians experience a much higher mortality.

The data presented here today have been made possible by the generous assistance of Statistics Canada and Health and Welfare.

Leading Causes of Death and Trends: 1970 - 1985

- Birth defects and conditions originating in the perinatal period, that is from 28 weeks of pregnancy through the first week of life, account for 70% of all deaths in the first year of life.
- During a fifteen year period infant mortality due to perinatal conditions decreased 69%.
- Over the last fifteen years there has been a dramatic reduction in all deaths surrounding birth and in the first year of life. Perinatal death rates (deaths occurring from 28 weeks gestation to 7 days of life), neonatal (deaths in the first month) and post neonatal (deaths between age one month and one year), all declined by at least 50% between 1970 - 1985.
- In 1985, injuries, birth defects and cancer are the leading causes of death in the pre-schoolers.
- Deaths in children aged 1 - 4 due to injuries and birth defects declined by at least 48% and 60% respectively, between 1970 - 1985.
- The greatest threat to children aged 5 - 14 is injuries. The second largest killer is cancer. In 1985, 482 youngsters died due to injuries compared with 162 for cancer.
- Death rates among 5 - 14 year olds decreased by at least 40% during the fifteen year period.
- Injuries and suicide are the main cause of death in the 15 - 19 year age group accounting for 73% of the deaths.
- Between 1970 - 1985, we have seen a downward trend in injury death rate in children 15 - 19 years, with some fluctuations noted across the 15 year period.

Low Birthweight and Trends

- Low birthweight is a marker for the complex interactions of biological, social and psychological factors surrounding the continuum of children's well-being and development.

- In Canada approximately 6% of babies born are of low birthweight.

- Over the last ten years the rate of low birthweight remained fairly stable at approximately 6% of all live births.

- Low birthweight infants (weighing less than 2500 grams) are more likely to die in the first year of life than normal weight babies, and are at significantly greater risk of such life long disabilities as autism, retardation, neuro-developmental problems, vision and hearing impairment.

Inequalities

A Mortality

Geographic

- There are variations in infant mortality rates between provinces. Newfoundland and Saskatchewan have rates which are 1.6 times greater than those in Quebec and Ontario.

- There are striking provincial differences in the rate of pre-school mortality from all causes. Death rates in Newfoundland are 32% above national level.

- In the school age population we also see some provincial variation in deaths from all causes. Saskatchewan and Newfoundland have rates above the national average.

- There are provincial variations in adolescent (15 - 19 yrs.) death rates. Alberta has the highest figure, a rate 40% higher than the rate in Ontario which was lowest.

Aboriginal Health

- A substantial decline in infant mortality has taken place over the last ten years. Nevertheless the infant mortality in the Status Indian population in 1984 remained approximately twice the rate of the total Canadian population.

- The number of stillbirths and deaths in the first week of life, (expressed as a rate per 1,000 total birth), are 80% higher than the rate for the total population.

- The post neonatal mortality rate (deaths between one month and one year of age) is four times greater among Status Indian population in comparison with the total population.

- Status Indian infant death rates from pneumonia and bronchitis were 12 times the rate for the total population. There is a death rate 7 times greater for gastro-intestinal problems and 5 times greater for injury/poisoning, when compared to those of the total Canadian population.

- Status Indian children aged 1 - 4 years were 6 times more likely to die from injuries as non-native children. For teenagers the rate is 4 times higher in the Status Indian population.

Poverty

- In 1971 age standardized mortality for all causes in quintile 5 (the poorest) was 160 per thousand or 43% higher than the rate attained in quintile 1 (the richest).

- In 1971 infant mortality in quintile 5 (the poorest) was 20 per 1000 live births in 1971 and 10 per 1000 in the richest quintile. While overall, infant mortality rates have fallen over this period, the death rate among the poor in 1986 was almost double the rate reported among the richest group.

Low Birthweight

- Canada compares unfavourably with the Nordic countries and also has a low birthweight rate (<2500 grams) greater than France and Japan.

- In 1985, a higher proportion of Quebec newborns were low birthweights (<2500 grams) compared to other provinces.

- Babies born to mothers with very little education, less than 8 years of education (a proxy measure of poverty), are twice as likely to have a low birthweight baby compared to mothers with university level education.

* Babies born to mothers with very little education, less than 8 years of education, have a 30% higher rate of prematurity compared to mothers with a university level of education.

* Babies born to mothers with very little education, less than 8 years of education, are twice as likely to be growth restricted compared to babies born to mothers with university level education.

Implications

In the review I have shown that death rates have improved at all ages. Also pointed out was the importance of injuries to the overall deaths. I also highlighted the continuing disparities in death rates and low birthweight by region, income and ethnicity.

It is recognized that inequalities in health are due primarily to economic, social, cultural, occupational and environmental factors. Therefore, priority for action must be devoted to these root causes. Governments have a part to play, but so do health professionals, local governments, employers, families and individuals. In other words, we need a partnership.

We also need to enrich our understanding of health to include information on a broad range of quality of life indicators. Traditional indicators such as mortality and hospitalization are not sensitive enough for non life-threatening conditions and quality of life measures.

Today's epidemics are accidents of circulation. Although a certain number of determinants remain an individual responsibility, like wearing a seat belt, the scope of responsibility remains outside in the social environment. The responsibilities lie with the government. They are the ones who can legislate regarding matters of environmental protection.

Firstly, we need adequate mechanisms for monitoring health. The review of child health in Canada identified serious deficiencies in basic information. The mental health area is a case in point, child abuse another, injury morbidity, ante natal care, health behaviour, dental health and nutrition are just a few examples.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF CARL D'ARCY
The Health of Families

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Dr. Carl D'Arcy - Director of Applied Research, Department of Psychiatry, University of Saskatchewan; and specialist in the social epidemiology of health and disease with particular emphasis on mental health.

PRESENTATION:

LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD - TOWARD EQUITY IN HEALTH

Introduction:

Health, families and health, and policies and programs designed to achieve greater social fairness in health are the three topics discussed in this paper.

First in terms of health, the general trend to increasing longevity among Canadians is noted and data on the social distribution of disease and health is presented. The issue of whether these differentials in health are fair or equitable is addressed. A distinction is made between health and disease.

Second the double-edged role of the family in health and disease is discussed.

Third, policy and program implications of these data and ideas for health and families in Canada are discussed.

General Trends in Health in Canada

Mortality

Mortality rates in Canada have shown a general and substantial decline. The crude death rate per 1,000 population has declined from 11.6 in 1921 to 7.1 in 1982.[8] The standardized death rate, which takes into account the changing composition of Canada's population shows an even greater change from 12.9 per 1,000 population in 1921 to 5.5 in 1982 (Figure 1).

These declines in death rates have not been uniformly distributed throughout the population. Between 1951 and 1982 the age-standardized mortality rates for Canadian women fell 42% while for Canadian men the drop was 21%.

Specific categories of diseases also show a more diverse pattern of decline. In fact, some diseases show increases over time.

Age standardized mortality rates for all cardiovascular diseases for women in Canada fell 53% from 396.2 per 100,000 in 1951 to 199.3 in 1982.[9] For men the mortality rates for cardiovascular diseases fell 34% from 512.4 to 350.7 per 100,000 population during the 1951 to 1982 period (Figure 2).

In contrast age-standardized rates for cancer, the second leading cause of death in Canada, continues to increase, although there are variable patterns for specific cancers.

The age-standardized mortality rates (ages 25-74) for all cancers show a slight increase of 6.5% over the 1969-83 period for males from 226.3 in 1969 to 240.8 in 1983.[10] For females the age-standardized mortality rate for all cancers has remained essentially flat. The rate per 100,000 decreased from 172.0 in 1969 to 168.9 in 1982 - a modest decrease of 1.8% (Figures 3).

However, the mortality rate for lung cancer for both sexes has shown a much more striking upward trend. For males the mortality rate for lung cancer increased 34% from 68.0 per 100,000 in 1969 to 91.1 in 1983. For females the increase in age-standardized mortality rate for lung cancer has been much more dramatic - a 152% increase from 10.9 per 100,000 in 1969 to 27.5 in 1983.

In general it has been estimated that there would have been almost 40,000 more deaths in Canada in 1984 if the risk of death had remained at the same level as it was in 1974.[11] About one third of these "avoided" deaths involved individuals less than 55 years of age.

Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is a measure of the mean length of life of a cohort assuming that the mortality pattern is stabilized at the level observed during a given period. It is seen as a good indicator of the overall health of a population.

Not surprisingly there has been a steady increase in life expectancy over the last several decades. Life expectancy at birth has increased from 61.0 years in 1930-32 to 75.3 years in 1980-82.[12] However, this general trend masks other patterns. For men, life expectancy at birth has gone from 58.8 years in 1920-22 to 71.9 years in 1980-82. For women, life expectancy has risen from 60.6 years in 1920-22 to 79.1 in 1980-82 (Figure 4). The gains for men over the six decades have been 13.04 years; for women the gains have been 18.46 years. Throughout these decades women have reported greater gains in life expectancy than men.

In international comparisons, Canada is not among the countries having the greatest life expectancy (Figure 5). It is surpassed by countries such as Japan, Iceland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Norway, who have greater life expectancy for both males and females. Switzerland and Israel report greater life expectancy for males. However, Canada does record longer life expectancies than the United States, Great Britain, France, West Germany, U.S.S.R., etc.[13]

Utilization of Services

There is a high degree of access to health services in Canada. Data from the General Social Survey of 1985 (a national survey of a random sample of 11,200 Canadians by Statistics Canada) shows that nine out of every ten Canadians contacted at least one type of health professional during the year.[14] Physicians were the most frequently consulted health care professionals with 8 out of 10 persons reporting at least one consultation. There are however gender and age differences in utilization patterns. Females reported higher levels of contacts. The proportion of the population reporting 10 or more physician contacts during the year increases substantially with age, particularly in the 65+ age category.

Self-Rated Health Status

The General Social Survey shows that the majority of adult Canadians rate their health status as very good: 32% rate their health as excellent; 49% as good; 15% as fair; and 3% as poor.[15] There is only slight gender variations in the self-rating of health. The highest proportion of any age group reporting excellent health is found in the 25-44 age group at 39%. This proportion decreases with age reaching a low of 15% in the 75+ age group.

Conclusion

In general these data indicate that the health status of the Canadian population has substantially improved during the early and middle decades of this century. There has been decreased risks of mortality, increased life expectancy, increased access to health care and considerable individual satisfaction with health.

However, there are some troublesome areas such as lung cancer mortality which do not conform to the general trend to improving health.

Equally clear is the fact that in comparison to some other countries Canada could still go a way to improve the health of it's population.

The Social Distribution of Health and Disease in Canada

While the general data on health in Canada suggests a picture of improving health a more detailed examination of the data shows that this improvement has not been shared by all.

For example while the data on life expectancy at birth shows substantial gains in Canada of 13 years and 18.5 years respectively for men and women over the last six decades, the data on life expectancy at age 60 reveals a somewhat different picture. Life expectancy for males aged 60 went from 16.42 years in 1920-22 to 17.97 years in 1980-82 - a total gain of only 1.55 years. For women aged 60 the increase has been from 17.02 years in 1920-22 to 22.93 years in 1980-82 - a total of 5.91 years.[16]

Clearly, the overall gains in life expectancy have largely been in terms of younger age groups surviving, no doubt as a result of conquering the traditional diseases of childhood. Also of interest, but less readily explainable, is the generally widening gap between male and female longevity. Women have generally benefited disproportionately from improvements in life expectancy, though there is some preliminary evidence that this general trend may be changing. One might be tempted to explain some of these gains in terms of improved prospects for childbearing; however, one should note that the gap in life expectancy between men and women who have reached 60 has also widened and appears to continue to do so.

Cross-sectional data on morbidity, the utilization of services, mortality, disability, health information and knowledge, health related behaviours, and general well-being show that significant differentials in health disease exist in Canada.[17]

For example, physical and mental health problems and disability vary by age and sex. Women report more episodes of illness and use more medical services than males but live longer. Males report higher levels of more severe illnesses such as heart disease, cancers, and accidents etc. than females. These gender differences are obviously a function of the complex interplay of physiological and social factors (see Figures 6-10).

There are regional and educational differences in self-protective behaviours such as immunization, pap smear testing, breast self-examination, exercise, cigarette smoking, etc. The highest level of immunization generally occurs in the Prairies.[18] Health protective behaviours are generally practised more frequently by those with higher education and by those with higher income levels (see Figures 11-13).

There are socio-economic differences in disability with those reporting higher levels of disability having significantly lower income and education (Figure 14).

There are occupational and income differences in overall mortality and in mortality from specific disorders.[19] In the lowest income category, accidents, neoplasms and diseases of the respiratory system in males, and congenital abnormalities in females, are relatively more frequent for those aged 1-14 years. Diseases of the circulatory system are the major source of income related mortality differentials in the 35-64 age group. Circulatory diseases are relatively more frequent causes of death in lower income groups (see Figures 15A and 15B).

The unemployed are found to report significantly higher levels of psychological distress, short-term disability, major activity limitation, health problems, hospitalizations and health service utilization.[20] Though health effects of unemployment persisted across various socio-economic and demographic statuses, they were more pronounced for some groups. Females and older unemployed individuals reported more health problems and physician visits whereas the "low-income" unemployed who were also the principal family earners, reported much more psychological distress.

With the exception of native Indian and Inuit populations, there is little data on racial and cultural groups in Canada. Unique aspects of ethnicity may affect health to some degree. However, since ethnicity may also overlap with socio-economic status, migration, religion and other attributes, it is difficult to determine specific effects.

Prior to arrival in Canada immigrants may have had exposure to physical and psycho-social hazards that affect health.

However, on average, higher income and educational levels are reported by immigrants. The persistence of unique cultural and structural elements can either adversely or positively affect the health of succeeding generations. In addition, there are some specific disorders for which contributing/protective genetic material is differentially distributed throughout the world's population. There are some British studies on the health and mortality experiences of different immigrants groups. No comparable studies are available for Canada.

The Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees after an extensive review of the literature notes that "migration per se does not predict an increased risk of mental disorder. However, certain contingencies may be part of the migration experience. When they occur, they increase risk for developing mental disorder." These contingencies include a drop in socio-economic status, language ability, separation from family, reception in host community, cultural isolation, trauma or stress prior to migration, and age at migration.

Native Indian and Inuit populations have significantly poorer health and much shorter life expectancy than the rest of Canadians. The greatest risk to life among the status Indian population occurs in the time from birth to one year and in adolescence and young adulthood. The still-birth rate for the Indian population is one-third higher than the national average. Indian death rates from violence, either self- or other-inflicted, or accidents, is substantially higher than national rates. These discrepancies in health are no doubt a reflection of the substantially poorer economic conditions and living standards that confront Canada's native populations (see Figures 16,17 and 18.) [21],[22],[23]

After reviewing extensively the available date in the distribution of health in Canada socio-economic status variables, in addition to the demographic variables of age and gender, emerge as dominant defining social characteristics that affect health status. Socio-economic status also substantially modifies the effect of demographic variables on health.

The longitudinal data on life expectancy by income category best illustrates these points about the impact of socio-economic status on health (see Figures 19 & 20). The data show some encouraging and some discouraging patterns. Life expectance by income quintile for metropolitan Canada in 1971 was reported to be 72.47 years for males in the highest income quintile and 66.33 years for those in the lowest income category. The comparable 1971 figures for females were 77.45 years and 74.62 years.[24] The same life expectancy estimates for 1984 are 75.36 in the highest income quintile years for males. For females the 1984 figures are 81.00 years and 78.89 years.[25] Thus, during the last decade or so there has been some reduction in the life expectancy differential between the highest and lowest income quintile for both men and women. The life expectancy differential for men decreased from 6.14 years in 1971 to 5.65 years in 1984. For women, the differential decreased from 2.83 years to 2.11 years. It should also be noted that gender differences in life expectance are greatest in the lowest income quintile. For males the average gain in life expectancy from birth during the 1971-1984 period has been 3.05 years, with greater gains being registered by the lowest income quintile, 3.38 years, in contrast to gains of 2.89 years in the highest income quintile For females the average gains were 3.70 years with similar greater gains in the lowest income quintile, 3.978 years in contrast to gains of 3.55 years in the highest income quintile. However, if we look at gains in life expectance at age 60, greater gains are recorded by the highest income quintile than the lowest income quintile: gains of 2.03 and 2.87 years for males and females in the highest income group and 1.83 and 2.83 years for males and females in the lowest income group. However, irrespective of age, significant differentials in life expectancy by income still exist in Canada.

Furthermore comparisons of life expectancy between native Indian and Inuit groups (some of the most economically and socially disadvantaged groups in Canada) and the rest of Canadians are not very encouraging in terms of reducing differentials in life expectancy. Although average life expectancy at birth for both Indians and the national population has improved, the discrepancy in life expectancy between Indians and the national population has largely remained unchanged or increased. In 1961, 1971 and 1981 the life expectancy at birth for male Indians were 59.7, 60.2 and 62.4 years - some 8.8, 9.1 and 9.5 fewer years of life expectancy than the national population. For female Indians life expectancies were 63.4, 66.2 and 68.9 respectively. Thus, female Indians had 10.8, 10.1 and 10.0 fewer years of life expectancy in 1961, 1971 and 1981 (Figure 21).[26]

Summary

The general picture that emerges from reviewing the literature on health and the distribution of health and disease is that the health of the Canadian population has improved during the last several decades. Canadians live longer and are probably healthier. However, these gains have not been shared equally by all segments of the population. In fact some inequalities may have increased over time. The health of the disadvantaged has not improved substantially relative to that of the advantaged.

Social inequalities in health are not unique to Canada but characterize to greater of lesser degrees industrialized societies such as Australia, Great Britain, Sweden, the United States, etc. However, the degree of health inequality varies from country to country; indeed the degree of health inequality may reflect the general level of social inequality in that country.[27]

International comparisons suggest that with respect to a variety of specific health problems Canada could indeed improve it's health performance.

The significant social inequalities in health existing in Canada affect the quality and length of individual's lives. There is no necessary reasons for their existence. They can be reduced.

Explaining Social Differences in Health and Disease

Sources of Health

When confronted with the fact that there are social differences in health in Canada the average Canadian is perplexed. Canada has medical care and hospital insurance programs. Everybody, more or less, has access to good quality medical care. So why should there be inequalities in health? Isn't that what comprehensive public medical and hospital programs is all about; ensuring access to care and thus decreasing inequalities in health?

Of course medical and hospital care are in reality part of the "sick" (as opposed to "health") care system. By and large they do relatively little to promote the health and general well-being of the population. They generally deal with people who have become "unhealthy".

Health does not solely or even largely come from the "sickness" care delivery system. It has a genetic and environmental (physical, nutritional and psycho-social) base. As Rachlis and Kushner note in their thought provoking book Second Opinion note, "Who we are, where we live, and how we live are principal determinants of health."[28]

The Ottawa Charter lists peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, sustainable resources, social justice and equity as prerequisites for health.[29] It is obvious that such prerequisites for health are much more likely to be differentially socially distributed.

Health does not just occur at one point in life, it occurs through time as various experiences throughout the life span are connected. The human individual may be more vulnerable to physical and psycho-social damage at specific points in the developmental process. Physical and psycho-social insults early in life may be more significant for health and well-being than similar insults in later years.

Theories of differences

A variety of loosely structured theories have been offered in an attempt to explain these persistent differences in the social distribution of health.

These theoretical approaches can be grouped under the general headings of artifact, natural and social selection, materialistic and structural factors and cultural and behavioral factors.

The consistency and replicability of research findings over time and across jurisdictions using a variety of operational measures argues for the dismissal of artifactual arguments as being basically implausible.

The second set of potential explanations, those of natural and social selection, argue that physical strength, vigour, and mental and physical ability are integral parts of the selective social sorting process. They are integral parts of the social stratification and differentiation system in any society. The relationship between socio-economic status and health is to be expected. Some would go further and argue that is the way it should be. The bright and healthy are at the top because they inevitability rise to the top. Their skills and attitudes are required at the top. The converse is also true.

Materialistic and structural explanations emphasize material aspects of social structure that influence health and life chances. In this case, material factors include variables such as housing, nutrition and the immediate physical environment. Differentials in the distribution of these goods in society is seen to account for variations in health status among various social groups.

Cultural and behavioral explanations emphasize the less material aspects of social structure. Emphasis is placed on differences in values, attitudes and priorities. One might also include variables such as information, networks and social supports under this category. Social differences in health protective behaviour would be explained in terms of how different social groups value health, the connections they see between discrete immediate acts and the longer term more global objective of health, the awareness of information, the willingness to make use of such information, etc.

It has been suggested that these last two types of explanation can be melded together as material and structural factors influenced by cultural and behaviourial factors.[30]

There have been relatively few studies that have attempted to assess the validity of these competing explanation.

Of the various theoretical approaches reviewed, those explanations that emphasize the material and non-material (cultural and behavioral) aspects of social structure appear to be the most plausible for providing an understanding of the origins and persistence of social differences in health.

The epidemiologic notion of "risk factors" associated with mortality may also be thought to provide an explanation for socio-economic differentials in morbidity and mortality in terms of cultural and behavioral factors. Researchers have noted the higher occurrence of negative health related behaviours in the lower socio-economic groups. There is a higher prevalence of cigarette smoking, overweight, elevated diastolic blood pressure, physical inactivity, excessive alcohol consumption, elevated serum cholesterol, and diabetes among men and women with a low level of education. There is also a higher co-joint use of oral contraceptives and cigarettes among women with lower education. These variables are "risk factors" that are significantly associated with cardiovascular disease. These results were consistent with recent Canadian studies showing that both men and women in lower socio-economic groups are more likely to die from cardiovascular disease.[31]

A recent California study showed that the differential distribution of risk factors account for approximately fifty percent of the excess deaths in the lower socio-economic groups. The other fifty percent of the excess deaths remain unaccounted for.[32]

However, National U.S. data also shows that even after controlling for age and health practices, health was associated with educational level, income and occupation.[33]

Follow-up of the Nutrition Canada Survey sample shows that cigarette smoking, hypertension and diabetes were factors associated with a significantly increased risk of death. An eleven year follow-up of that sample looking at the effects of income and risk factors shows that after controlling for the effects of the risk factors of smoking, blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol, there was still a significant income effect. This income effect was most pronounced for the lowest income category, more pronounced for females than for males, and more pronounced for cardiovascular deaths than for deaths from all causes.[34]

The fact that risk factors do not "explain away" most of the socio-economic status differentials in health should not be surprising. There is no guarantee that the risk factors considered are all the relevant ones that affect health. The measurement of the risk factors themselves is subject to error and in need of refinement.

However the most important point to make with regard to risk factors is that it is not sufficient to conclude that risk factors provide part or most of the explanation of socio-economic differentials in health. Rather, the existence of social differentials in health-related behaviours in reality begs the question: Why are there socio-economic differentials in such risk factors as cigarette smoking, obesity, leisure-time physical activity, and what can be done about them?

Berkman points out that if socio-environmental conditions influence physical health they must do so through some biological pathway.[35] If socio-environmental conditions function, in part, by altering risk factors, it is a mistake to treat such risk factors as simple confounders rather than as potential mediators or pathways leading from a social experience to a health outcome. Berkman points to exercise/chronic heart disease relationships.

There is a growing body of literature which links social and psychological stress to reduced functioning of the immune system. This nervous system/immune system interaction provides an additional plausible mechanism of action linking psycho-social stressors with physical and mental health outcomes. This is of particular interest for stresses differentially associated with social class position.

In understanding illness, illness behaviour and disease it is important to recognize that illness is also a social and psychological process, not just a physical or medical phenomena. Also important is the cumulative nature of life experiences, the notion of a life span in which experiences in earlier stages of life affect the development of, and reactions and responses to symptoms in later life.

Socially descriptive categories or variables such as age, gender, socio-economic status, etc., are in fact shorthand for constellation of factors that involve:

-experiences - physical, social and psychological
-attitudes and values - perception of choices, readiness and willingness to take action, etc.
-resources - material, psychological and social

In essence, in describing social groups we are referring to individuals and groups of individuals that have had different experiences both physical and social psychological, have differential access to resources both physical and social, and develop different attitudes and values, which in turn lead to different experiences. Various constellations of experiences, values and resources may be more or less factorable to positive health outcomes.

Theories that seek to explain social differences in health have to take into account these differentials in experiences, resources, attitudes and values and their effects through the life span.

Inequalities or Inequities?

There is some ambiguity in the literature as to whether the social differences in health documented here are inequalities, that is uneven but implying no judgement as to "rightness" (if anything there is a hint of individual responsibility), or inequities, that is unevenness that is unjust, the result of bias and unfairness. Inequalities may be noted. Inequities demand action.

There are three criteria that can and should be used in judging whether social differences in health are inequities or inequalities.

First, can the health outcome be modified? To a large extent this is a function of our existing knowledge; however, the very fact that the health outcome is differentially distributed socially implies that it is in most cases amenable to modification.

Second, it can be argued that social inequalities which start early in the individual's life are in fact inequities - a result of the unfairness or bias in the social stratification system. Inequalities that start early in life are circumstances or events over which the developing human individual has little or no control. Health differentials early in life not only affect one's immediate health but also may affect the developmental process and the acquisition of other relevant skills essential or useful to "success" in later life (ie., schooling). The data for Canada do indeed show significant social inequities in terms of peri- and neo-natal mortality and morbidity. These social inequities also persist through childhood (see Figures 21, 22 and 23).[36],[37]

Third, inequalities in health can be perceived as inequities insofar as they result from factors that are outside the reasonable control of the individual. For example it can be argued that mortality associated risk factors are themselves inequities if:

1. relevant information concerning these risk factors is socially distributed
2. there is a differential cost attached to the avoidance of risk factors
3. the risk factors provide positive reinforcement and no alternative positive reinforcements are readily available

These later points really refer to the role of the social environment in health. Though "environment" issues in promoting health and preventing disease were prominently featured in the Lalonde Report of 1975, they have been neglected and overlooked.[38] There is sufficient existing evidence to show that health information is differentially distributed socially, and that there are some significant increased economic and social costs associated with pursuing healthy lifestyles.

It is of interest to note that the Honourable Jake Epp, then Minister of National Health and Welfare, in his seminal paper on "Achieving Health for All: A Framework for Health Promotion" writes that one of the three major challenges for the Canadian health care system is that disadvantaged groups have significantly lower life expectancy, poorer health and a higher prevalence of disability than the average Canadian.[39]

Families and Health

The family's role in health is that of a two-edged sword.

On the negative side a family history of disease, whether it is heart disease, diabetes, depression, anxiety or alcohol abuse/dependence, is a risk factor that increases the likelihood of an individual getting the disease.

Families are sources of sexual abuse, incest and physical abuse of children. Wife battering and abuse occurs in families.

Parents who engage in unhealthy behavior are more likely to have offspring who engage in similar risk behaviours. Parents who smoke are more likely to have children who smoke.

Among recovering schizophrenics increased contacts with family and relatives has been found to be detrimental to positive outcomes.

The greater frequency of occurrence of physical and psychiatric disease in families does not imply that these diseases are solely genetic in origin. The fact that some diseases "run in families" is consistent with either a genetic or environmental cause for these disorders. It is also consistent with the disorders having both genetic and environmental causes.

On the other hand families can and do have a positive impact on an individual's health status. The lack of a family history of heart disease or psychiatric disorder means a decreased risk for the individual of getting such a disease. A healthy family will more likely have healthy children.

Social support among family members can speed and improve the recovery from heart disease.[40] Support from family members can improve the quality of life among seniors.

Positive health related practices such as not smoking, exercise and good nutrition are likely to be passed on from one generation to the next.

The family per se is neither uniformly positive nor negative with respect to physical and emotional health. It is the specifics of families that must be examined. The positive aspects of families for health need to be supported and the negative aspects of families need to be neutralized. With regard to emotional and physical health not all families are healthy. Families can be pathogenic physical and psycho-social environments.

Trends in gender employment patterns and family formation and reformation suggests that other aspects of the social structure such as schools will have to play a larger role in the health of children and adolescents.

The increasing number of lone parent families and the increasing number of children in Canada living below the poverty line (some 1.1 million children in 1986) also implies an enhanced role for other aspects of the social structure in helping children and adolescents achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle.[41]

Although a physically and socially disadvantaged childhood is detrimental to future health, there are some "resilient" individuals that overcome initial difficulties. Werner and her colleagues in a longitudinal 30-year study of a cohort of children from the Hawaiian island of Kuai found a variety of individual temperament and socio-environment factors that contribute to positive outcomes. The individual temperament factors included a fairly high degree of activity, a low degree of excitability and distress, and a high degree of sociability. The socio-environmental factors were that "resilient" children generally came from families having four or fewer children with a space of two years or more between themselves and the next sibling. They also had an opportunity to establish a close bond with at least one caretaker from whom they received positive attention during the first years of life. That nurturing might come from a grandparent, older siblings, aunts, uncles or regular baby-sitters. As they grew older, resilient children seem to find a great deal of support outside their immediate family from neighbours, schools, etc.[42] [43]

What is important here is the supportive and nurturing function and role not the particular aspect of the social structure that performs that function. Thus interventions are possible to aid individuals and to aid families to improve both their physical and mental health.

Implications for Health and for Families

There are several sets of implications that are inherent in the data and material discussed here.

First, it is evident that health is a social commodity much like any other social commodity such as education, income, housing, etc. It is differentially distributed. Some people get more of it, some less. Those on the top of the social stratification system do much better on average than those on the bottom.

Changes that reduce the larger social inequalities in society will also reduce health inequalities. Changes that improve the standard and circumstances of living throughout a society will reduce health inequalities within the society.

Policies and programs that enhance the economic security and resources of families - all families - will have a beneficial effect on the health of individuals who are members of those families.

Second, the fact that publicly accessible comprehensive health care (both medical and hospital) programs have not eradicated inequalities in health suggests that 'health' is broadly based. Others have more eloquently documented the importance of traditional sanitation and public health measures in reducing mortality and improving health during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[44]

The major illness problems today are of a chronic illness and disability nature rather than the result of acute infectious diseases. New strategies have to be developed to meet these changed circumstances.[45] More access to the traditional health care delivery system will not necessarily improve the overall health of the nation or to reduce the significant social differences that exist in health and disease.

There are significant social differences in the practise of health protective behaviours. These behaviours can have a significant impact on health status. More effort needs to be placed on health promotion and disease prevention. In pursuing such a strategy the emphasis must be away from a 'blaming the victim' approach and towards an approach that attempts to understand the context and positive reinforcing elements of the "risk" behaviours in order to get the leverage necessary to effect change in those behaviours.

In terms of illness prevention, we need to earmark for action those areas in which substantial improvements can be made. Examples include the provision of adequate sewer and water systems in native communities, vaccination levels, adherence to diabetic diet treatment regimens, pap smear register and reminder systems.

It is apparent that inequalities in health start early in life. We do not start off on a 'level playing field', but rather the playing field for some is bumpy and distinctly sloped. To help level that playing field, health promotion and illness prevention initiatives for mothers and children and adolescents should receive the highest priority.

Health promotion and prevention activities should be broadly conceived to include nutrition, good housing, and other aspects of the physical and social environment conducive to well-being. The broad socio-economic circumstances in which people live has a significant impact on the quality and length of life.

Health and Socio-economic Goals for Canadians

Perhaps the most significant acts that could be taken to stimulate action to improve the health of Canadians would be the settings of specific and measurable health and socio-economic goals.

The setting of measurable and specific health goals would first stimulate programs and services aimed at achieving these goals. There would be a heightened utilization of existing knowledge. Secondly, the existence of target health goals would stimulate and guide research to measure the achievement of those goals and to assess the effectiveness of programs, services and specific techniques in achieving those goals.

The setting of measurable and specific socio-economic goals in terms of employment levels, poverty levels, income levels, educational levels, etc. will provide the sound broader framework within which more focused health goals can operate. The importance that we attach to the role of the family and of childrearing have to be evidenced in policies (such as tax policy) and in social legislation, not merely mouthed as words.

Some Specifics for Health

* As part of the initial process of setting goals for health five health problem areas should be targeted for immediate action. These are:

1. cardiovascular disease
2. cancer
3. accidents
4. native Indian and Inuit health
5. mental health (including addiction and dependency problems

The available evidence shows the existence of significant social inequities in these areas. The tools and knowledge to begin to do a much better job in these areas exist. We can have a significant impact in reducing inequities in these areas if we wish to.

* It is suggested that children, and by implication, the mothers of young children, should be targeted as a specific sub-group of he population that could be very profitably exposed to increased health promotion and disease prevention efforts. Mothers are largely responsible for the health of children. They are central to the initiation of new positive health protective behaviors in the next generation. Positive health practices and illness prevention efforts started early in life are more likely

to 'stick'. They can also influence health and health behaviors during the early and formative years of life. Early implementation enhances the potential of protective health practices having positive impact and payoff.

It is noted here that young families in Canada are most likely to have low income. The proportion of children living in families with low incomes has increased during the 1980's. Approximately one in five children in Canada currently lives in a low income family. The emphasis should be on minimizing the negative impact of poverty on health as those children grow.

In particular, the effects of poverty upon children's health and the acquisition of relevant skills necessary for productive adulthood needs to be minimized.

* School-based health education programs should be developed, tested and evaluated for effectiveness in encouraging positive health attitudes and behaviors. Emphasis in these programs should be on nutrition, accident and exposure hazards, exercise, stress management and mental health.

* Research on the prevalence and incidence of stress in various social groups and the impact of stress upon health needs priority funding. The impact of stress upon the immunological system is an exciting area of research with significant potential.

Conclusion

We have today the knowledge and resources to improve the health of all Canadians and their families. We need to apply what we already know. However, we also need to know more so we can provide reasonable and ethically acceptable solutions to persistent and new health and social problems.

What we have to make sure is that we also have the social and political will to apply that knowledge and those resources so that all Canadians start off on a level playing field and thus have the opportunity for better physical and mental health.

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45. Ibid.

PANEL PRESENTATION OF JANE FULTON, PH.D.

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PRESENTATION:

Social Trends and Issues Affecting Dental Health

A new theme at the World Health Organization has resulted from an examination of social trends and issues in health. It is called healthy public policy. A healthy public policy is a policy that considers health impact as an equally important outcome to other policy goals and through which politicians accept responsibility for the health of the public. (Our goal is to bring health to the attention and to the agenda of policy makers.)

A healthy public policy is a coordinated action that leads to health, income, and social policies that foster greater equity.[1]

Healthy public policy is achieved by taking advantage of opportunities to influence policy while being aware of (and circumventing) economic and political barriers to our goals. We recognize that we cannot separate health from other social/personal goals.

Goals for Healthy Public Policy

"Above all, healthy public policy should be goal oriented and set clear targets which are regularly reviewed."[2]

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1. Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion

2. Health Promotion (1986) Vol. No. 4, p. 447

When there are no specific goals for public policy then it is easy to put any policy in place. Once policies are assessed/evaluated in terms of their impact on health as well as on industry/business/the economy then choices may have to be made on which is more important: public interest or individual/special interest.

For example, if these hard choices are not faced then it is easy to subsidize the growth and manufacture of tobacco while also committing research funds to the elimination of cancer of the lung. In order for nations to move ahead rather than ride off in all directions we need a consensus about goals. Our efforts should focus on making health a goal of all public policy.

Jurisdiction

"Systematic building of healthy public policies should take place at all levels: international, national, regional and local.

In Canada, we are faced with continuous disputes over jurisdictions from policy making. For example, federal and provincial governments can share a jurisdiction (e.g. transportation), or a problem can be multinational (e.g. acid rain). Thus anybody trying to achieve consensus faces a problem in someone else's jurisdiction.

One of the ways we try to cross jurisdictions is with the use of suasion (or persuasion), which J.K. Galbraith suggests is the most powerful tool in a democracy.

The Environment

Many factors in the environment impact on health generally or influence a particular problem.

What policies are now in place that control the environmental factors that impact on health? We look beyond the health sector for examples.

-the selection of school teachers who support the mental health of children.

-clean air in the workplace.

-speed limits and the enforced use of seat belts.

-the income and social assistance available to single mothers.

-immunization.

-the residential options available to the elderly.

-prohibiting tobacco advertising.

Opportunities

What are the general mechanisms for influencing public policy?

-legal, economic, political, structural, educational, religious and organizational.

In addition to these general mechanisms, a number of opportunities exist that are not commonly perceived to be available for influencing policy.

At least five situations offer such opportunities.

1. when public consensus emerges (or strong public support for action) e.g. smoking limitation, community based health services, dying with dignity.

2. changes in budget allocation, e.g. frame your problem to fit into the areas where the budget is available.

3. charismatic and competent leadership (political will)

4. a time of real or perceived crisis, eg. AIDS, population aging

5. elections

Factors or events which help us to identify these opportunities when they do occur:

-consumer demand or trends; opinion polls
-intertemporal queue (timing policy directions in a variety of sectors)
-media coverage
-announced cutbacks or funding opportunities

Identify what resources we need; and find out if they are available to us

-we need to find advocates for change
-create a message
-attract the attention of the public and politicians

For an issue to reach the policy arena it often needs interest group involvement in publicizing the problem, pressuring for change.

Determinants of Success: Factors Which Decide Whether an Initiative Becomes Policy

-intensity of the lobbying - many fronts, many messengers
-influence of the lobbying group(s) and messengers
-commitment of the group(s) to the issue - be single minded if possible; focus on one objective
skilfullness of the lobbying group(s) and messengers
-receptivity of community to the issue and the implications of changing the status quo
identification and neutralization of opponents
-the willingness of the group(s) to help with technical and procedural problems, i.e. write good briefs, accumulate evidence, provide alternatives
-avoid recommendations that are too general, too "motherhood" and without details of implementation and expectations of outcome.

Social Trends and Issues That are Barriers to Healthy Public Policy

Economic

-power of opponents. The economic power may be based in the political affiliation of private interests; the economic vulnerability of populations, or control of the press (through ownership or advertising revenue).

Political

-jurisdiction (e.g. producers of acid rain are not the recipients)
-short time horizon of politicians; re-election may come first
-politicians with vested interests

Personal

-fear of entering someone else's domain
-fear of accepting responsibility for outcomes in the political/social arena
-fear of going against tradition
-unwilling to deal with contentious and emotional issues

Cultural

-conventional wisdom - "fluoride is rat poison"
-rejection of family planning

Procedural/Technical

-lack of understanding of the policy creation process
-inability to be realistic and practical
-inadequate group dynamics skills

Creating a Window of Opportunity - Getting Healthy Public Policy on the Agenda

Long Term Strategies

-outreach to policy makers to identify and explore possible routes for healthy public policy
-education of the next generation of policy makers
-develop and implement strategies for health impact studies
-educate the public; reduce fear of the unknown

Short Term Strategies

-actively articulate a vision or outcome
-generate consumer pressure through:
  a) public education
  b) lobbying
-generate a unified message from all primary interest groups
-deliver the message from multiple sources
-recruit allies outside of the primary interest groups
-understand who controls the agenda and deliver messages and pressure directly to them
-ensure education and practical experience for those who work with you
-develop unity of purpose among those people writing policy
-make your proposal politically attractive

Consultation Towards Healthy Public Policy

Consultation leading to possible opportunities for healthy public policy has a number of intermediate gains or losses. (Adopted from M.C. Baetz (1986) York University.)

BENEFITS:

1. It can provide a framework for planning, ie., working group on health promotion at Health and Welfare Canada.
2. It can assist in structural reform, ie., hospitals replaced by community health centres.

3. It can result in knowledge, understanding and plans for education of special groups, ie., AIDS information, dental health for children.
4. It can focus opinion on possible success of specific programs.
5. It can increase tolerance for the views of others.
6. It can guide government policy makers.
7. It can strengthen the community based infrastructure that is essential to a creation and implementation of most healthy public policy.

DANGERS:

1. It may allow power groups to strengthen their interests if there is public apathy about the issue.
2. It can be a public relations exercise.
3. It can delay government action.
4. It can allow manipulation or co-optation.
5. It can muddy the waters about the target of government action.

Creating Opportunities That Lead to Productive Outcomes

- Get constructive input from a variety of sources - positive and hostile.
- Identify a common source of health problems
- Identify issues and common concerns that exist over time.
- Get information from government of areas available for negotiation or initiative.
- Plan ahead, be proactive.
- Follow up.
- Try to make time to work on complex and controversial issues.
- Understand your own role and responsibilities.
- Try to make consultation continuous rather than episodic.

Avoid co-optation

- Don't let politicians use consensus exercises for partisan purposes or public relations.
- Don't let government misuse your recommendations to support their own policies/programs/actions without focus on healthy public policy.

Jane Fulton, Ph.D.

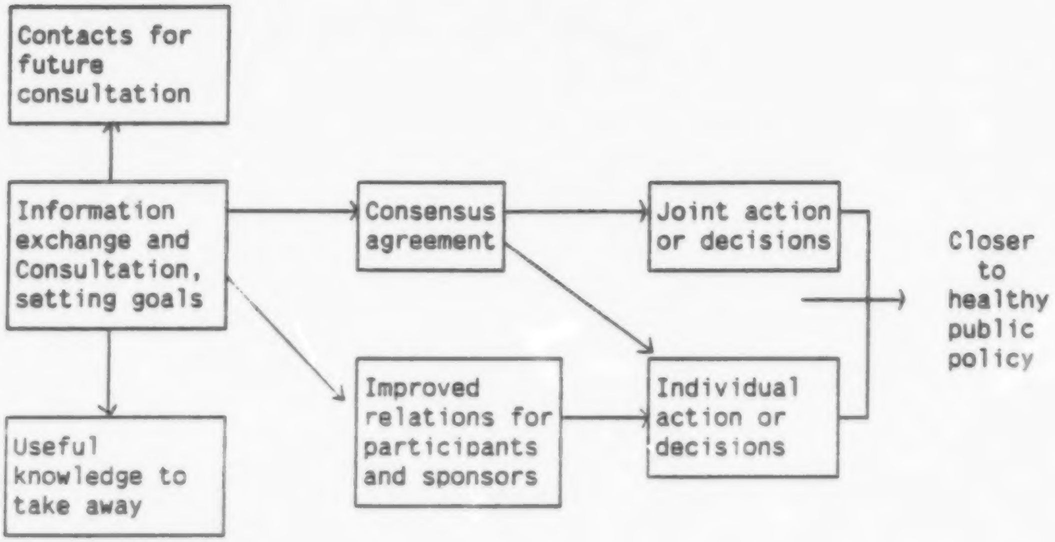
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY

for Canada	for you
- public consensus	
- changes in budget (and on occasion, changes in government)	
- charismatic leadership	
- crisis	
- public apathy combined with a strong private (or political) interest	

generic factors that apply overall

One difficulty - in terms of health impacts as well as other impacts there are usually losers as well as winners.

Figure 1 BEGINNING THE HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY CONSULTATION TOWARD DECISION MAKING


Contacts for future consultation
Information exchange and Consultation, setting goals
Useful knowledge to take away
Consensus agreement
Improved relations for participants and sponsors
Joint action or decisions
Individual action or decisions
Closer to healthy public policy

adopted from Baetz (1986, York University Press)

Timing

A change of government can render useless recent progress on policy development. However, it can also be an opportunity to put forward policies that may have been blocked by a previous government.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF DR. TERRENCE R. MORRISON

Education and Families

Dr. Terry Morrison - President of Athabasca University, Alberta; and two-term President and Director of the Vanier Institute of the Family. Author of numerous articles on family and educational policy, Dr. Morrison was recipient of an Honourary Doctorate, Ramkhamhaeng University, Thailand, January 1989.

PRESENTATION:

> "I am part of the sun as my eye is part of me. That I am part of the earth my feet know perfectly and my blood is part of the sea. My soul knows that I am part of the human race, as my spirit is part of my nation. In my very self, I am part of my family."
>
> David Herbert Lawrence

To ponder the relationship between families and education is to bridge the private and public aspects of human existence. Typically, the family is perceived, even reverenced, as a private institution, closed off from the outside world and exempt from public scrutiny. Public education, on the other hand, functions in the open tied with innumerable strings of public accountability. Families are very much affected--enhanced, troubled and changed--by public action in schools and other educational settings. Similarly, educational choices are shaped by the actions of individual families. It is this recursive relationship, the feedback between public decisions and family decisions, and the inevitable dilemmas which flow as a result, which forms the basis of this paper. John Dewey once remarked that the "whole child comes to school." He was right and he/she brings his/her family with him/her.

Social scientists, policy makers, educators and therapists of all shades of opinion often begin a discussion of the family with a definition of "it." I intend to break from this tradition and not attempt to define the family. I do so, since it is my firm contention that the image people have of the family is of far greater importance in shaping their attitudes and actions, than any so-called objective and "scientifically" arrived at definition. The family is a symbol for a range of meanings embedded in the codes of our culture. And as all aspects of culture, it is imagination which unlocks meaning. In the words of Humpty Dumpty, whom Alice meets sitting high up on a wall, confident in his powers over both gravity and language, "when I use a word . . . it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less." So let us imagine the family.

The image of the family has, as the family itself, changed over time. Within these shifts in image, though, the family has been repeatedly identified in people's minds with various virtues or vices.[46] Ironically, the virtues seen in the family by one generation are frequently judged by succeeding generations to be vices. The shifting role of women within the family is a case in point.[47] The family has been heralded and damned as both a preventer and generator of crime, morality, intelligence, sexuality, mental health, social change, temperance, violence; the list goes on. Depending on social or cultural circumstances, the family, to borrow a phrase from advertising, has always been a "hot property."

THE NOBLE FAMILY

Today, rather two opposite and generalized images of the family shape public awareness and attitudes. The first I call the image of the noble family. This image of the family is rooted in a nostalgia for a presumed golden era of the family; the specification of that era usually being a function of one's personal age. The nostalgia itself is often infused with a combination of strict normative ideals regarding family life and a yearning for those ideals to be realized in today's world. To a degree, it is the equivalent, in the world of the family, of the social gospel.

The noble image of the family encapsulates a number of themes. Within this image, the family is predominately nuclear in form--parents and children living under one roof. The family is also a private institution, providing what Christopher Lasch referred to as a "haven in a heartless land."[48] It provides a serene retreat and source of unqualified comfort for its members. Family members are tied closely to one another through the bonds of love, nurturance and intimacy. Mutual caring and unconditional support characterize family relationships.

The noble family is also a child-centred family where parents express their identities and aspirations for the future through their children. Indeed, thoughtful planning for the secure life of the next generation is an abiding concern. While personal identity has a place, selfishness is non-existent. The noble family plays together and enjoys the leisure pursuits of the world as a group. The cares of the world are left behind the door of the home, while parents and children savour the joys of family living.

The noble family is highly ritualistic. Celebratory occasions in the society are enjoyed together and a collective mythological set of rituals are generated as each family develops its own markers of historical time. Memories are touched by a combination of bliss, warmth and togetherness. The noble family shares in the traditions of society and builds, within these, its own traditions. In the noble family, finally, a familial personality is borne which transcends the personalities of individual members. Families search for evidence of each other in one another. This familial personality is best expressed in the phrase "a couple and their children."

Many will react to this description of the noble family as being excessively idyllic. This is definitely true and yet this truth explains why, in the face of contrary reality, significant numbers of people cling to it as their preferred image of the family. When people talk of "improving the family," it is precisely these truths they want to preserve or reclaim. When they talk of "strengthening the family," so too, these characteristics of family life are at the centre of their concern.

The image of the noble family is alive in our society, and given the changes and confusion of this era, is actually growing in strength. In this regard, it is rather ironic, if not paradoxical, that the noble image is gaining in strength precisely at the time in which the reality of family life displays the opposite characteristics.

FAMILY REALITIES

What of the reality of family life? How closely does it parallel or depart from the noble image? Without engaging in an exhaustive breakdown of statistics, which other contributors to this conference can more adequately undertake, consider some of the more salient dynamics in demography, work, ideology, law and social problems which are affecting families today? Consider, as well, the degree of congruence between these patterns and the noble image of the family.

Demography

Families are experiencing unprecedented changes in their structure and form. Demographic shifts in the population of Canada have altered the composition of individual families. It is important, though, to locate these changes in an historical perspective. Some, like the dramatic increase in the paid employment of married women, are revolutionary in nature. Others, such as the declining birth rate, are continuations of long-term trends. Still others represent compositional changes, such as the transformation of the single parenthood group from predominantly widows to primarily divorced and single persons. Whatever the impetus for these transformations, the trends sketched below have intruded upon the noble image of the family and the various policies and programmes based upon or urged in relation to it.

Aging Population

The population aged 65 and over has been the fastest-growing age group in Canada in the 1980's. The number of elderly Canadians rose 14% from 2.4 million in 1976 to 3.0 million in 1986, a rate of growth more than three times that of the population as a whole.[49] The proportion of the population aged 65 and over now stands at 10.7% of the entire population. Estimates place this figure around 20% by the year 2000. Interestingly, there has been a marked decline in the population aged 15 - 24. Between 1981-86, the number of 15 - 24-year-olds fell by 10%, with the overall share of the general population attributable to this cohort declining from 19.1% to 16.5%. The child-centred, nuclear image of the noble family obviously flies in the face of an aging population, with its inter-generational issues of parental care and income support for the elderly.

Declining Birth Rate

Women gave birth to only half as many babies in the late 1970's as they did during the peak of the baby boom in the late fifties.[50] The average family in the 1900's included four children, but two children is today's norm. Indeed, fears that the birth rate will permanently fall below "couple replacement" has led to periodic calls for renewed incentives for "baby production." It has also given rise, as in early periods of our history, to a growing xenophobic reaction to immigration.

Marriage on Demand

Despite the widely held view that marriage is losing its attraction, and being replaced by less formal types of conjugal relationship, marriage continues to be a popular past-time in Canada. Nine in ten Canadian men and women continue to marry at least once in their life-time.[51] What has changed is the timing of marriage; it is increasingly variable throughout the life cycle.

The marriage rates for both men and women under age 25 has declined since the early 1970's. In contrast, the marriage rates for both men and women in their 30's to 40's has increased. The overall average age of marriage has also been increased from 1975 to 1986, from 25 to 27.4 for brides, and 27.4 to 30 for bridegrooms.

This elongation in the age of marriage, plus is variability in the life cycle, means that an increasing number of families have partners with a range of adult experience outside of married life which they bring to family life. This broadened life experience prior to marriage suggests that couples can now and do compare their married life to experiences outside of a familial context. Such a mirror of non-familial personal experience casts an intriguing and unstudied hue over the modern family. While suspect on many issues, Freud may have been prophetically right when he remarked that when two people made love, there were really four people in the bed: the two there, and the two being fantasized.

Divorcing on Demand

It is likely that the true social deviants of the future will be those couples who remain in their first marriage for their entire lives. This postulate is compelling when one realizes that the annual divorce rate in Canada has increased dramatically over the last two decades. The number of divorces per 100,000 married women rose 25% in 1986 to an all time high of 1.255.[52] The divorce rate, in fact, has doubled in each decade since 1968. As well, the duration of marriage before divorce has become shorter, dropping from 15 years in 1969 to 9.1 years in 1986.

Strange as it may seem, the marriage rate is also on the increase. The percentage of marriages in which one partner is marrying for at least a second time has increased from 10% in 1955 to more than 20% in 1986. Contrary to the conventional rhetoric of marriage breakdown, our society is almost cyclically frenetic in its marrying and divorcing.

Parenting Alone

The rising divorce rate has led to a dramatic increase in lone parenting. In fact, over one million Canadian children are currently living in families with just one parent; and the vast majority of these parents are women.[53] Lone parent families, particularly those headed by women, moreover, face a range of economic disadvantages. Over one half of the lone parents headed by women, for example, have incomes that fall below official Statistics Canada Low-income cut-off lines. Lone parent families headed by women generally have less favourable living accommodations and fewer basic household facilities than other families. While statistics can be deceiving, the following relationship is truly startling: over the period 1966-86 the number of lone parent families rose 130%, while husband/wife families increased by only 42%. By 1986, families headed by lone parents represented 13% of all families. By 1986, as well, about 1.2 million children, more than 14% of all children in Canada, lived in lone parent families, a doubling of the number since 1966.

Dual Earner Families--The New Norm

One of the most dramatic aspects of social change since World War II has been the rapid entry of women into the labour market. The social, economic, legal and policy implications of this dynamic are still being addressed in this country. As a growing proportion of women have entered the labour force, the number of families in which both husband and wife have wage and salary incomes has increased. Between 1967 -1986, the number of dual earner families rose from 1.3 million to 3.4 million.[54] In fact, by 1986, dual earner families represented the majority of husband-wife families in Canada.

Dual income appears, as well, to have a dramatic impact on the placement of the family on the income ladder. The average income of dual earner families was almost $50,000 in 1986, compared with just under $40,000 for families in which the husband was the sole provider. The importance of the second income is even greater when income quintile and low income data are analyzed. In 1986, 81% of families in the upper fifth of income distribution were dual earners, in contrast to just 35% of those of the bottom fifth. Only 4% of dual earner families, moreover, had income levels below the low income cut off.

Work

Beyond changes in the basic demography of the family, the relationship of families to the society at large has been transformed. The line between the private family and the public realm has blurred. To some extent, the family has become a social corporation exposed and functioning in the public market, but guided in that by rules and values are semi-private. The family's relationship to the world of work is a case in point.

Since the industrial revolution, there has been a gradual separation of paid work from the family. The world of paid work, until recently, the world of men, was severed from the family, whose role it was to support the male psychologically and socially in that endeavour. The family, in other words, adjusted its schedule and psychology to the world of work. Family time was what remained after work time.

Today, this pattern is beginning to shift. Flowing from concerns over energy conservation, transportation, the quality of working life, the role that non-work place factors play in productivity to an awareness of the decentralizing potential of new information technology, a range of alternative work patterns are being developed.[55] These workplace factors find congruence in a growing awareness of changes in the traditional family roles of men and women and the altered structure of the family itself.

As a result, the traditional relationship between the family and work is being rethought. The family is intruding upon work and the once clear delineation of spheres is weakening. The reform of work, including demands for flex-time, compressed schedules, part-time employment patterns, job sharing, workplace day care, and parental leaves has much if its inspiration in this intrusion of the family. The world of work has come face to face with the working family, forcing a re-examination of the long-standing social contract governing that relationship.

The relationship of the family to the world of paid work is but one aspect of a change in the place of work in family life. Due primarily to feminist scholarship and conceptual problems in development economics, there is a fast growing recognition of a long-standing historical fact: the family is a place of work. It is a context, more particularly, in which women throughout the world, toil for hours with little recognition or pay. This work by women in families provides some of the most essential services in our society, including child care.

At least two issues arise out of this recognition of the volume of unpaid and unrecognized familial-based work undertaken by women. The first is the distorted picture generated of the overall G.N.P. for nations, since these are based solely on volumes of paid work, rather than the total productivity of an economy. Most development policies and programmes, as well as approaches to economic policy within nations, are based upon an incomplete picture of the true productivity in a society.[56]

The informal economy, of which unpaid family work is a central component, today underpins a creative and growing response of many in the Third World--and increasingly the so-called developed world--to the state's incapacity to satisfy the basic needs of the poor and underprivileged. Many of the victims of underdevelopment have already begun to take advantage of this informal yet highly productive form of economic activity and are revolutionizing concepts of the national economy. The style and context of work in the family, as part of a growing network of informal activity, may, as in Hernado de Soto's view, provide another path toward development; one rooted, not in the state, but in the creative imagination of people.[57]

Unpaid work in the family also poses issues related to the ways in which our society defines and values productive contributions to it. Most entitlements, pensions for example, are based on participation in the economy of paid work. For this reason, countless women are excluded from these benefits, since their work while, seen on the rhetorical level as productive, is not defined as of "value" in the calculation of entitlements. If our society is serious about the family, then a broader concept of the relationship of productive work to civic entitlements is overdue.

To recognize and attribute value to unpaid work undertaken in a familial context is to expose two fundamental fallacies in conventional economics and its associated policies. The first fallacy is that pay rather than work itself is the basis upon which value and contribution to society should be calculated. The second fallacy is that money payment is the sole criterion for the assessment of work. Work can also be assessed by volume: in terms of the labour power involved in the process (number of workers) or the work time absorbed (number of hours). By using such an analysis, for example, Finnish economist Hikka Pietila has calculated that, in Finland, the so-called informal economy absorbs 54% of all work time and generates 35% of the money. This contrasts with 10% of time and 19% of money generated in the export economy.[58]

The distinction between paid work and contribution through work to society has been captured by Simon Kuznets in the concept that economic activity should serve the needs of people rather than the reverse. When applied to the concept of GNP, this means that GNP should be a criterion for the net production of the society, which has a positive value in the light of human needs. It means that a nation's economy should be assessed both quantitatively in terms of money invested, as well as qualitatively in terms of hours spent, people involved and social needs met.

A recognition of the productive contributions to society of work undertaken in the family forces us to begin to think about the whole economy and its impact on people. Imagine, if one can, that nation's annual budget becoming a realistic description of the well-being of the community, a reflection of real wealth and different values. The budget, when viewed in this light, would answer the following types of questions. Who does what work and where--paid and unpaid? What is the position of the nation's children and aged? Who is not housed adequately? Who has the poorest health? Who relieves the state of the burden of care and dependency on others? This may seem like a strange approach to the national budget. But is it? Think for a moment. Aren't these the types of questions families actually deal with in their own budgeting?

Families and the Law

Historically, marriage existed as a private relationship, often an alliance between families, still practised by tribes today, with neither state nor the church involved. This was also the case in relationships between parents and children. In essence, marriage constituted a form of contract, although it lacked enforcement by formal institutions with the "terms of the marriage" circumscribed by societal norms. In one sense, all marriages involve a contract, although many provisions remain unknown to the partners until the marriage breaks down or one or more of the partners seek redress for presumed wrongful behaviour. At that point, the partners discover that the state has a third party interest in their family.

Throughout the twentieth century, the sphere of the state's third party interest in the family has broadened substantially shifting, according to many experts, the basis of family law from private contract to state-regulated status.[59] As a result, the courts, as agents of the state, are currently wrestling with and being pressed to wrestle with and determine for family members the sanctioned basis of their relationship in a host of areas which were, heretofore, settled through contract, in the privacy of the family. The right to marry, marital rights to privacy, reproductive freedom, spousal and minors' rights in abortion, children's rights, marital sexual privacy, grandparents' visitation rights and elder, spousal and child abuse--these and a host of other elements of family relationships are now subjected to state adjudication. In the orchestration of family relationships, today, the state is increasingly serving as the conductor. The problem with this situation is that, too often, people's lives have been changing faster than the rules and policies which flow from the state and its agencies. The result has been an increasing tendency to prematurely pinch off personal choices and social options.

This situation has led to a politicization of the family in our society in which two bi-polar positions dominate the politics. The first position, the regulators, call for increasing state control over the rules, obligations and sanctions which should govern relationships within families. The second group, the de-regulators, call for a "privatization" of family relationships, with a concomitant withdrawal of the state from areas in which it has no expertise or business. Each group, though, appears to be in agreement that the goal is harmonious, respectful loving and caring relationships. Thus, disagreement is on means. One thing is certain, in the age of politics of means, the family has become a major battleground over the issue of the appropriate role of the state in individual lives.

Ideology

During the past 25 years, the presumed moral virtue of the family has been exposed to a telling analysis by the women's movement.[60] Gender inequality and violence are now seen as potential outcomes of certain styles of family life. Due in large measure to the women's movement, public consciousness of the family has become more informed, critical and to some extent simultaneously more or less supportive. This has led to a re-examination of family life style and political actions affecting that life style.

The era in which the family per se is seen as a fundamental good has passed. In today's world, the appreciation of the family is more context specific: people in families are judged by their attitudes and actions in particular instances. Increasingly people are being told that they must "work at" building familial relationships. Indeed, these relationships, once presumed to be strong by virtue of their containment within the family, are now seen as potentially the most fragile in our entire society. There has emerged, in this regard, a new ethic of social choice: That each person should live only with the people he/she finds it satisfying to live with.

The new ethic of social choice leads, moreover, to a new outlook on living: that people should be empowered to choose how to spend their lives, defining themselves in the process. Volition is upheld, within this view, not only because of its focus on the exercise of individual will, but also because of the transformation of individuals and communities that may result. In such a world, the intrinsic capacity to act is of paramount importance. Personal choice alters shared values, which in turn reshape the possibilities of choice. This continuing process, rather than some stated list of ultimate objectives, defines the good society.

Unbounded by any value principle, the new ethic of social choice could lead ultimately to a form of amoral individualism in which there would exist no difference between hedonism and altruism. Alongside individual decision-making within the new ethic of social choice is, however, a commitment to social tolerance. This commitment to diversity has its roots in the belief that the community, as a whole, is enriched by variation, both of individuals and groupings. Acceptance of differences is, in fact, seen as an encouragement to social cohesiveness by eliminating many of the root causes of dissociation. It establishes, as well, according to this view, a new pluralistic ground for unity.

This new pluralism embedded in the ethic of social choice is expressed in the vision of an open community. The open community does not assume that those born there will remain or that those nor born there can never enter. It posits, rather, that people grow and change and need different forms of association at different points in their lives. The open community will be hospitable to new ideas, new ways of functioning. It will never be finished or complete.

The concept of an open community exists on a precarious balance. It must strive to maintain itself as a stable enterprise with institutionalized values, while simultaneously being open to change; to give up the old in the light of new ideas and discoveries. The idea that communities might develop the capacity to function in this dual and continuously evolving state demands a suspension of belief, for our experience with community is more like a closing circle of believers, ever suspicious of outsiders and strangeness.

Raymond Williams offers an image of resolve this intermingling of openness and closure: While the clenched fist is a necessary symbol, the clenching ought never to be such that the hand cannot open, and the fingers extend, to discover and give shape to the newly forming reality."[61] The appeal of the open community is not in any action agenda, but in the vision it portrays. It affirms the importance of individualism as well as the necessity for common life. It acknowledges that old forms will not work with new people, new times, new ideas. It is a metaphor, as well, for the paradox of contemporary familial life.

Perhaps more than any single change affecting the family, this new ethic of social choice radically re-shapes the boundaries of what is possible and desirable in familial living. Central to this ethic is a three-fold call for change: (1) removal of formal impediments to volition; (2) provision of the basic requisites of choice and (3) acceptance and sanctioning of the divergent choices of others. It forces us to think about processes rather than outcomes, and individuals rather than aggregates.

The new ethic of social choice frightens many in our society since it creates an image of constant change in personal and social identities. The negative reactions of many to newly emergent family forms is a case in point. While the new ethic promises to take us far from the present, that journey is to places presently unknowable.

To a large degree, the contemporary debate on the family revolves around the future consequences of the new ethic of social choice. For its advocates, a focus on choice within the ethic heralds a transition to a new era of social fairness. For its opponents, the new ethic of social choice portends a transition to an era of social anarchy. The true value of the debate on social choice, however, rests elsewhere. More than anything, the new ethic of social choice has brought squarely to the fore the question of the role of the individual within familial and social life. Unlike the past, this question can now be addressed in a context in which society can legitimately choose.

THE TRAGIC FAMILY

The image of the noble family, despite its continued popularity in the perception of many people, no longer accords with the objective reality of the family. This gap between image and reality, has spawned an alternative image, that of the tragic family.

The tragic image of the family, as with its noble counterpart, contains within it a number of themes. Within this image, the nuclear structure of the family is seen to be cracking under the weight of divorce and the variations in child care and relationships which that brings. The tragic family is an anxiety-ridden institution in need of public intervention or therapeutic treatment. Family members are locked into unfulfilling double-binding relationships in which cries for attention and love go unanswered.[62] Depression and anger characterize family relationships. The tragic family is adult centred with parents or partners focusing upon the primacy of their own ego needs. Children are burdens in the adult search for ego satisfaction and victims in the all-consuming individualism of the modern world. Children's future, if contemplated, is defined as "their problem."

The tragic family, rather than being a comfortable haven, is something to be escaped from. The memories it develops in its members are those of betrayal, brutality, lack of caring and unfulfilled needs for personal intimacy. It is around these memories that the rituals of the tragic family revolve. The result is not a familial personality, but a cluster of scarred personalities in need of healing and repair.

Many will react to this description of the tragic family as exceedingly pathological. Yet, in the face of dramatic change, in which most elements of the noble image no longer seem to exist, people's apprehension and a loss of idealism convert into a generalizable sense of tragedy in a relation to the family. Their calls are not just to strengthen the family, but to save those victimized by it.

FAMILY IMAGES AND EDUCATION

What do these bi-polar images of the family have to do with education? All views of the relationship between education and the family are based upon some image of the family itself. Just as the family is no longer a segregated institution apart from the society, so too the school and other educational institutions are embedded in the larger society.

Images of the family in the larger society profoundly affect the content and process of education. The familial image, in fact, shapes the educational model. The critical issue in any discussion of the relationship between the family and education, in this regard, centers not on the content and process of education, but on the image of the family upon which that content and process are built. The congruence of the familial image with the world as it is, and as we would like it to be, is the starting point in any approach to education which hopes to save, strengthen or involve families.

What images of the family currently guide our approach to education and what is the validity of those images? What image of the family should guide our approach to education and why? If one hopes to develop a family policy for education, then these questions must be debated publicly, not assumed to be answered through rhetorical expressions of either concern or nostalgia.

Our approach to education today is trapped by the images of the noble and tragic family. Each image has its advocates. Each image, moreover, generates its own educational purpose; one informed by a sense of nobility, the other by tragedy. Each image, moreover, produces its own model, one in which the school is a cult; the other a clinic.

Concern about education and its relationship to the family centers today broadly on three things: the content, process and structure of education. Concern about content focuses on what is taught about the family. Concern about process centers on how that content is taught or learned. Concern about structure focuses on the degree to which educational institutions accommodate families and their needs. The noble and tragic images of the family each lead to different approaches to the content, process and structure of education and each, ironically, make life more difficult for families.

EDUCATION AND FAMILIAL NOBILITY

The image of the noble family continues to pervade much of our discussion about education. This is particularly so among those who are not on the firing line of the process itself--the so-called "non-experts" in family matters. Noblists see schools somewhat as they perceive families, as idyllic sanctuaries for growth and learning untouched by the "problems" of the world. Young people, with their minds eager for learning, present themselves, as blank tablets, on which truth, and values are to be inscribed.

The noblists' curriculum is drawn directly from the image which so pervades their perceptions of the family. Under the guise of family life education, young people are to be given the knowledge and "skills" which will prepare them for "family living." Commitment and communication are the supposed keys to "success" in family life. Under commitment, young people are to understand the sanctity of marriage, the paramount importance of fidelity, the obligations and joy of parenthood, the need for self-sacrifice, and how "love conquers all." Serious conflicts, of an ethical or political nature, are not entertained in the curriculum, since belief in the virtue of the family brings with it peace and congruence.

Communication is the vehicle through which commitment is expressed and maintained. It is the glue which binds people together in a lasting loving relationship. Noblists, therefore, urge that the curriculum of schools provide young people with the skills of active listening, paraphrasing, role taking, elaboration, and generalizable non-verbal sensitizing. A new vocabulary is also present; love-making for the "F" word, sensibility for eroticism, sharing points of view for arguing and time out for a desire to be alone.

The C2 curriculum of the noblists, while positive in its intention, leaves its learners wholly unprepared for any behaviour which is in violation of its norms and approaches to human relationships. It is an "all or nothing," win-lose curriculum, in which the winners are joyous and the losers are left with a deep sense of guilt over their failure to perform or understand.

Noblists approach the process of education in ways which mirror their image of the family. Textual material is carefully scrutinized to ensure that only "healthy values" are present. Role models, or exemplars of the practice of family living, are particularly valuable as mentors for the younger generation. Older teachers, particularly those with strong family relationships, are sought after. Inter-generational discussion is encouraged, particularly in the context of "marriage enrichment." Young people are encouraged to work with and understand young children usually in early childhood rather than day care settings.

Noblists take quite seriously the traditional legal definition of the school as acting in loco parentis. That is, the school functions as an extension of and is accountable ultimately to the parent. The paramount rights of the parent to legitimate or censor the educational process of schooling is at the heart of the noblists' approach to the structural relations between the school and family. To ensure that there is a smooth relationship between family preference and the school's response, noblists are strongly in favour of home and school associations and the use of parents as "volunteer teachers." In this regard, noblists dismiss the differential ability of parents to participate in their child's schooling as evidence of a lack of parental concern. Day care, after school care, school lunch programmes and other support programmes for lone parenting, dual career or harried families are resisted, since they fly in the face of the image of the noble family.

The Achilles heel of the noblists' concentration on the centrality of parental preference in the education, within schools, of their children is that different parents have different preferences.[63] Finding ways to accommodate the dramatically opposed preferences for a religious or secular context for education is a case in point. So too are the debates which inevitably surround, not only whether to have sex education, but also what the content and form of such education should be.

Parental preference in the education of children, particularly within a public school, involves the dominance of the ideology of particular families over other families. Public schools have attempted to cope with these power conflicts by adopting an increasingly pluralistic stance--a tendency which only increases the dissatisfaction of noblists who accuse schools of having lost any sense of clear purpose or values. The so-called "excellence" movement in schools is, in part, a mask for this power struggle between family ideologies. The rise of interest and participation in private schools is also a reflection of this ideological struggle for control of the public school.

Those who argue that schools and the education of children will be improved through increased parental involvement in the structure, process and content of education, rarely address the question of which parents, with what family ideologies, should shape that involvement. After all, one of the reasons for the emergence of the public school in this country was the failure of the family to care for and educate all children in society.

EDUCATION FOR TRAGEDY

The tragic image of the family generates an approach to education which is therapeutic in nature with the school functioning as a clinic. Teachers are seen as "helpers," "care givers," "parent surrogates," and amateur psychologists. Their role and that of the school is to "fix the family" and heal the scarred personalities produced by it.

Within the tragic image of the family, the content of the curriculum is to be shaped by the personal and social problems being experienced by children and their families. Life skills, value clarification, education for sexuality, form part of this thrust. Psychological testing and tracking of students into "problem streams" for more effective treatment is also urged and practised. The so-called academic side of the curriculum is often a vehicle for dealing with the "real life of kids."

The process of education within the tragic familial image is more akin to clinical practice than teaching. Often parents are defined as the source of problems which their children experience in school and they are regularly informed of their inadequacies and irresponsibility. While the noble image of the family produces a sense of parental bliss, the tragic image engenders parental guilt. Within the tragic image, parents are rarely asked to be involved in their child's education at school. They are, however, encouraged to attend special sessions for them in which they are to be "treated." When parents are asked to help their children, it is under instruction and supervision of the school--even while at home.

Within the tragic image, the structural relations between the family and school are mediated by a growing host of social technicians--psychologists, social workers, counsellors and community development workers. Testing and treatment define the family school relationship in this professionally mediated arrangement. Increasing rates of so-called "family pathology" are met with cries of increased need for professional supports for the school system. These, when met, ironically, lead to the identification of even more family pathology. Within the tragic image, the family is caught in a never ending cycle of diagnosis and treatment.

THE FAMILY AS FUTURIST

Both the noble and tragic images of the family suggest that the family is a passive agent in the face of social change. The life history of the family is a story of a loss of nobility or the onset of tragedy. Society, schools included, is held accountable for this equally sad state of affairs with constant urging that the proverbial "they" must do something for "it." This "something" is to either "restore" it, "save" it, or "destroy" it. My argument is that we should do something truly revolutionary in relation to the family: understand and flow with it.

The family, as individuals, has a paradoxical quality about it: it behaves differently. This is because the family exudes a janus-like quality. Some of the most traditional virtues are preserved in the family, while some of the most vile vices are also generated there. In many cases, it provides a caring environment while, in others, it is the root context for sexual and physical abuse. It is a place for love and a place for hate. The family is good and bad, fair and unfair, safe and unsafe, warm and cold, and a place to return to and a place to escape from. What explains this dance of opposites in the case of the family?

The basic reason for this paradoxical quality is that the family has always been the laboratory of change in our society. This is traceable to the fact that the family serves as the mediator between individuals and the social forces and institutions affecting them. It has both facilitated the adaptation of individuals to social change and initiated change itself. The family is neither active nor passive; it is both. It is fundamentally elastic.

The family, over time, has lost some parts of some functions and yet regained parts of these and added new functions. This sounds strange. Not so, if one can perceive the elasticity of the family's relationship to a changing world. While the family lost its role as a center of production and education in the industrial revolution, the new technology of the information age may bring learning and working back home. So too, one of the most profound changes affecting our society, the shift in the demographic profile, was not, to use a pun, born in the school, church or workplace, but in the family.

The family, moreover, is often the initial context in which people experience and attempt to cope with core changes in our society.[64] The introduction of television, the movement of women into the labour market, the extension of compulsory education, the rise of the welfare state, cyclical unemployment, the ethics of abortion--these and other changes are more often than not felt first within the family.

The strategies developed by various families to deal with these and other changes often imperceptively form the basis for larger social and policy strategies. The range of strategies being developed by families to take charge of their lives and allocate their resources to secure their own, their children's and increasingly their parents' future, in many ways provides the options and choices for society in the future. The family, contrary to conventional wisdom, is one of the contexts in our society which is most attuned to the future. If there is a lag, it is between the future the family faces daily and the world of the past with which most other institutions in our society cope.

The image of the family as futurist, an elastic agent of rather than a passive victim of social change, calls for a new perception of its role and value. Rather than study and respond to the family as something in need of restoration or repair, our society needs to learn from it and what, in particular, it foretells of the future.

The value of the family in our society is not rooted in its preservation of the past or struggles with the present. Rather, its value rests in the timeless historical fact that it confronts and learns from change developing, as a result, as a repository of strategies for survival, adaptation and growth.

These adaptive strategies for coping with change are precisely the skills and knowledge which we claim we are in search of in this uncertain and complex world. How do various families plan their lives particularly under conditions of adversity and rapid social change? What kinds of strategies are they following in their adaptation to changing social conditions over the life course? How do families juggle multiple roles and obligations as children, parents, workers and members of larger kin networks? How are individual careers synchronized with collective family ones? What family forms and arrangements are developed to cope with change any why? How do families cope with excessive bureaucracy, intrusive professionalism, and the ethical dilemmas of the modern world?

Because it faces these and other questions on a daily basis, the family is best seen as a dynamic process with a constantly changing interaction of personalities within that. In this sense, the family provides society with a major and untapped strategic resource for understanding, adapting to and coping with rapid change.

What does the image of the family as futurist, with an elastic relationship to societal change, suggest for schools and education? While a host of new possibilities in the relationship between schools and families can be imagined within this image, I would suggest that serious attention is warranted on at least five: (1) An Open Curriculum; (2) A Familial Perspective on Educational Policy; (3) A Suspension of Premature Expectation and Categorization; (4) An Inter-generational Awareness and (5) A Complete View of Knowing. Let us examine each briefly.

An Open Curriculum

Both the noble and tragic image of the family lead to a curriculum which is bounded by nostalgia and cure respectively. That which is to be learned about the family is taken for granted. The debate, if it arises, focuses on the means of transmitting the message.

The image of the family as futurist suggests that the family is being created anew, in various forms containing various patterns of relationship, daily. It is not and will never be in a finished structural or relational form, unless of course, the world stops changing. The goal of the curriculum, it follows, should be to provide a context in which children and young people can understand this dynamic process and the choices and dilemmas it presents to them and others. It means, using the experience of young people themselves as alternative models for coping with change; not as a bedrock from which to forge particular ideals or hone therapeutic techniques. It means, as well, examining the range of strategic options for coping with change which are being generated in familial environments.

For a curriculum to deal with such matters, it must be open unbounded by particular family ideologies and their value underpinnings. It must, as well, not lead to premature closure or blind adherence to conventional norms. An open familial curriculum, moreover, should expose young people to the entire range of family strategies existing and emergent, as well as the value and moral dilemmas that arise therein. It must be non-discriminating and non-repressive in both its design and implementation. Sexual abuse, physical violence, gender discrimination, power, divorce, and other such issues must be squarely addressed in such a curriculum and set alongside their janus-like counterparts of love, caring and compassion, if the young are truly to understand the dynamic process we call family. Moreover, teachers must be empowered as learning guides for such a process of education.

Some, undoubtedly, will say that such an open curriculum invites fear and anxiety in the young or that they are unprepared to cope with the ideas or experience. Others will be wary that vices rather than virtues will be taught. It is ironic, however, that we teach children about war, and its associated holocaust without fear of generating anxiety. We teach children about extremely abstract scientific and other concepts without fear of their ability to comprehend. And we teach various moralities without providing the tools for moral decision-making.

The world of the family is one context in which the young share experience; although not a common one. What they need is a context in which to interpret, compare and give meaning to these experiences. If the school is not the place for this mutual sharing of and learning from experience, then where are the young to turn? To their peers and the media as they increasingly do? To their parents who may or may not be available?

If the curricula of schools are to address the family in any way, then it should be the family as it is and is becoming. The family, as one would like it to be, is a matter of informed personal choice. The young will eventually choose; in that they have no choice. For society at large, we have to select the informational grounds upon which that choice will be based. In that, we have no choice.

Educational Policy: A Familial Perspective

Given the family's mediating relationship between the individual and the outside world, decisions taken and policies adopted in most areas of the society have an affect on the family. For this reason, educational policy is family policy. While many people, upon reflection would agree with this statement, schools and educational bureaucracies rarely give ongoing and systematic attention to the consequences, for various types of families, or of the intended and unintended effects of their decisions or policies. Much that affects families is also an indirect, by-product of policies, ostensibly directed at other "non-family" issues.

As an integral component of decision-making and policy development, there is a need, at all levels of the educational system, for the development of what can be described as a family sensitizing map. This type of analysis should not be confused with family impact statements. Impact statements require the specification of and consensus on indicators of family well-being. The difficulty with an impact approach, in this regard, is that given the diversity of families, in terms of structure, function and need, no single measure of family well-being will suffice.

A family sensitizing map, on the other hand, is a descriptive and open assessment of the potential impacts of decisions and policy on families in various circumstances. The following types of considerations are taken into account in drawing a family sensitizing map.

Intensity: How large are the projected consequences? Are they potentially profound or superficial?

Extent: Are the effects long-term or short-term? Are they dynamic or static? co-extensive or sequential?

Range: Does the impact portend consequences for all families or particular groups? Do effects vary with life cycle stage?

Value: Would families affected see the anticipated consequences as beneficial or harmful to their interests?

Importance: How significant are the expected consequences? Are the changes apt to be irrevocable?

A family sensitizing map, as proposed, should be developed within an orientation which addresses the realities of families and to do so in a way in which it can serve as an educative vehicle for those constructing and using the map as a guide in decision-making.

The family sensitizing map (FSM) should reflect a view of families as active rather than passive. In this context, families can be approached as part of the solution rather, than as typically is the case, the repository of the problems. Moreover, this orientation allows for the development of educational policies which are supportive to families in achieving their goals, rather than generating policies which tend to replace families by substituting public services.

The FSM should also be informed by an awareness that families are changing. This encompasses the obvious alterations in family structure, but it also includes a sensitivity to transitions of families as members move from one role to another and from one life cycle stage to another. Acknowledgement in the FSM of variations across families, as well as changes within the same family, can lead to policies and programmes better tuned to the different needs of different types of families at different times. Rather than global and generalized concepts, families can be described in terms of the issue at hand.

Finally, the FSM should encourage policy makers to look for the possible inadvertent impact of policies on families, particularly families beyond the group at hand. What, for example, are the effects of a programme like Head Start on Parents as Well as Children.

Communities, schools and governing bodies, which are serious about families can develop simple procedures which require a FSM to be part of discussions or recommendations for action. Indeed, the FSM is a device which the community can use to monitor effectiveness in education. A word of caution, though, is required in using FSM: The map is not necessarily the territory. It is always a representation which should be checked through personal experience. Failure to do so can lead to the further obstruction of the life experiences of those in families.

Suspending Premature Expectation and Categorization

The image of the family as futurist tells us that it is always in dynamic transition. The flux of family life is its life. Within families who you are today, you are not tomorrow. You are also like yesterday, but different. Most parents know this simple truth. They also know, if they have been through the life cycle as parents, that the predictions they established for their children rarely turned out, in living colour, to be accurate.

Why, with this folk wisdom in our midst, do we continue to insist, within schools, on setting premature expectations for adulthood for the young accompanied by increasingly precise categorization systems? Even when people marry in this day and age, we hope they will try to love and honour each other.

The establishment of premature expectation and categorization levels for the young in schools would make more sense if it accorded with evidence of predictability. But it does not. The relationship of performance in one level of school to success at another, or to success in schooling to "success" in work role, is far from a uni-directional link. Time, it is said, will be the resource of the 21st century. The young, in today's schools, need to use their time to learn, not to meet artificial expectations of adulthood and to accumulate the supposed labels of progress which are dispersed. A time out from adulthood, and its problems and fears, can only help the young to be what they are--young. As the Beatles song reminds us, "Let It Be."

Education: A Life Span Perspective

There is no more poignant example of the image of the family as futurist than the ways in which the family copes with individual and societal aging. Indeed, Ken Dychwald has argued recently that the aging phenomenon has given birth to a new family form: The Matrix Family.[65] Unlike the nuclear family of the noble image, the matrix family is adult-centered, and trans-generational where relationships are bound by choice and friendship as well as blood and obligation. As Matilda Riley, an expert on aging noted: my daughters and I have survived together for 45 years, of which only 18 were in the traditional relationship of parent and child." If education is related in some way to life, and I cannot imagine it otherwise, then the elongation in our lives surely has profound significance for education.

Our society today is increasingly aware of the aging of its population. One of the latent dangers in this renewed appreciation of the process of aging--in addition to our suspicions of an emergence of a new and powerful gerontocracy--is that it will degenerate into a numbers game dominated by economists and actuarial mathematicians who want to count heads or various therapists who want to practice corrective psychological surgery on those same heads. Society, today, in other words, wants to prematurely define aging as a "problem" or "issue" and act quickly to "solve" it, before we really understand it.

What is the "modern" phenomenon of aging? To grapple with this question, we must assess the process in an historical perspective. In this context, there are several aspects of modern aging which sets is somewhat apart from our historical experience with the process.

The first factor is that our earthly time allowance has shot up rapidly from an average of 40 years to 70 years plus and all of this has occurred within the experience of all of the "old people" alive at present. Nothing comparable to this has been known before. Both the young and old now have exposed to them a new dimension of existence, an emergent cultural phenomenon. which poses a host of political, economic, legal and moral issues.

A second difference between aging historically and its contemporary expression is that, with the exception of those few individuals who achieved remarkable longevity, most people, in the past, were not involved in the aging process. They lived without thought of it or preparation for it. And for good reason: for disease regularly thinned out the population. Our forebearers' knowledge of the destruction of the physical self was unlike anything we understand by hospital visits or simply walking down the street. Theirs was a world where it was the exception to go grey, to reach menopause, to retire, to become senile. Because of its incompleteness, life before operated on different premises than today. Above all else, it was precarious and conditioned people to plan education, work and the future of their children in cut-down or halved time.

A third difference between aging then and now is reflected in the perception of death and dying. Modern man places dying in what he takes to be its logical position--the close of a long life. Our forbearers accepted the futility of placing it in any position at all. "In the midst of life, we are in death," they said, and they meant it. To them death was a fact of life; to us it is a metaphor--the final stage of growth.

Historically, death was also sudden and swift, arriving through plague, childbirth and disaster. So altered is our relationship with death that the basic process is almost reversed. Increasingly, we have to contemplate announcing ourselves to death--typically through euthanasia or voluntary suicide--rather than be impacted by it. Indeed part of the reason why the so-called "new old" suffer in our culture is that the "not-so-old" subconsciously resent the fact that many of the old are still vital and competent. The number of bitter legal battles over compulsory retirement or proposals to ration work are testimony to this attitude.

The old today have been made to feel that they have been sentenced to life and turned into a matter for public concern. They are what Ronald Blythe calls the first generation of full-timers, and consequently, the first generation of people for whom the state and its professional agents are having to develop special supports and facilities.

In this regard, it is critically important to recognize that the old today are the first travellers in an uncharted cultural territory. They are experiencing collectively complete lives and, in the process, learning about the meaning of that experience. It is important, then that those who claim to be inducting people into the realities of life account for this new reality. To do this, particularly if one is an educator or a member of a helping profession, a habit of mind must develop which will allow the old to transmit to us what they have learned from their experience. What is needed, then, in the light of complete lives, is a communicative bridge between the generations, one which is unencumbered by labels, categories and status concerns.

The value of this historical excursion is to point out that the so-called problem of the aged are the people who are not yet old. With full-span lives becoming the norm, people may need to learn how to be aged as they once had to learn how to be adult. This process may prove to be less onerous if those who are charged by society with inducting, that is teachers, recognize some of the unique bonds of similarity which exist between the young and old. A basic link is the lack of envy in young-old relationships. The young do not want to be old, and nor do they believe that they ever will be, while the old, generally speaking, do not wish to be young. Once through the life process is sufficient for most.

The young and old are also sympathetically joined by their common experience with the burdensome aspect of life. Being strong and confronting the prospect of a full life can be as daunting as being weak and facing the eclipse of life. There are other links. The young and old protest and grumble. Very little of this occurs in our rather elongated middle period. The young and old protest as a common expression of their sense of importance and passion each of which is dampened by the pragmatism of middle age.

The case of aging illustrates the irrelevance of linear goal setting within education wherein the next so-called developmental stage is used solely to guide the education of those one step removed from it. The reality is that ages inter-penetrate each other. One's current developmental status is best seen as the hub of a wheel connected intimately to other "stages" through the stored experience of oneself and others. This ecological condition means that the purpose of education should be to have people appreciate their interconnectedness to various dimensions of the life cycle rather, than as currently is the practice, to have them grow out of their current stages to presumed "higher stages" of development.

Complete Knowing

In recent years, researchers from a host of disciplines have outlined a contextual concept of truth. These researchers and theorists have argued that there is no truth by which all truths can be judged nor any foundation of truths nor any total and inclusive narrative of all true statements. They have suggested, as well, that distinctive ways of knowing and criteria of truth arise out of practices; that is, all thinking arises from and is tested against practises.

Practises are collective human activities which are distinguished by the goals that identify them and by the resultant demands made on practitioners committed to those goals. Horse racing, for example, is defined by the goal of winning a race by means of riding a horse over a finish line. Natural science, seen as a practice, is defined by its goal of understanding nature's workings so that they may be explained, predicted and controlled. Central to the search for "scientific control" is replication by experiment.

Thinking, then, depends on practise, the context of its generation and application. Given this premise, then thought is social in at least two respects. First, all concepts are defined by shared goals and the rules and means of achieving these. Science, like any other kind of thinking, presupposes communities of participants, shared goals, and an agreement that some methods of researching goals are appropriate while others are not. The disciplines which currently provide the foundation for the curriculum in public schools are borne out of particular practises and the conventions which guide these. While they are valuable as a lens on the world, these disciplines do not represent the range of practises in our society, nor the modes of thinking which flow from them. To this extent, the education our children receive in schools is cognitively incomplete.

Recent feminist scholarship has built upon the idea of knowledge and knowing in context, to suggest that there are perspectives on the world and "ways of knowing" which are hidden from the younger generation. Sarah Ruddick, in a recent work on maternal thinking, has described eloquently a taken for granted practise which engenders its own form of thinking--maternal practise.[66] Maternal practise, a response to the reality of a biological child in a particular social world, confronts and deals continuously with the demands for preservation, growth and social acceptability. To be a mother, according to Ruddick, is to be committed to meeting these demands by works of preservative love, nurturance and training.

On an ongoing basis, mothers think out strategies of protection, nurturance and training, including the relative meaning and weight of each. Mothers also reflect on their practise as a whole. Maternal work, in other words, demands that mothers think and out of this reflective need a distinctive discipline emerges.

Maternal thinking, then, is a type of discipline, a mode of reflection and thought, with its own methods and aims. Even though people's behaviour is restricted by the discipline they engage in, no one needs to be limited to a single discipline or perspective on the world. No person because she is a female, or he is a male, should be denied any intellectual activity which provides meaning and value to them. There is a time for history, science, mathematics, language training. And there is a time for maternal thinking and that time is when minds are young.

Schools ostensibly exist to foster and develop the critical mind. It is common sense epistemologically that alternative perspectives offer distinct critical advantages. Maternal thinking is one discipline among others, although not recognized as such, capable of criticizing and being criticized. If the education we offer the young is to be perspectively complete, then maternal thinking and other ways women know, must form a part of it. To assume that science and conventional disciplines will lead to an understanding of this mode of knowing, is to fail utterly to appreciate the role that practise plays in thought.

Beyond epistemological balance, maternal and other forms of women's knowing, are desperately needed because of what they tell about change and ways of coping with that. A mother, who daily thinks our strategies of protection, nurturance and training, must confront and deal daily with change. Children are expected to change; rapid conversions, shifts of interests, new loves, and sudden hates are part of childhood. Mothers also change as they confront these changes. What one learns on one day or in one phase of a child's life cannot be applied exactly; often not by analogy, to a new situation.

Maternal experience with change and the kind of learning it engenders can potentially help us to understand the changing nature of all peoples and communities. It is not only children who change, grow and need help in growing. We all might grow, according to Sarah Ruddick, "if we could learn how." For everyone's benefits, we must now face the issue of putting the vast unrecognized experience of women with change into a new and broader level of application. What better place to begin than the school and for what better purpose than to provide a "complete education."

Conclusion

It is a stunning paradox of contemporary society that we bear witness to increasing fragmentation and emotional distance in the very midst of increasing interdependence. Even as our society and economy become a dense network of interlocked activities, in which people are more interlinked and interdependent, we are becoming more separate. The family, once the enduring source of connectedness, is now the context in which interdependence and independence mingle as people cope with challenges and problems of an uncertain and complex world. In this the family mirrors the larger paradox of contemporary life and for that reason, it will always remain as society's unfinished business.

All of us have a family, whether we have met or lived with them. This fact we share as experience, memory or fantasy. It binds us together as members of the human race and, at the same time, it pulls us apart. The family stimulates and blocks our potential. It fosters and prevents egalitarianism. The family shapes us and we shape it. The family gives us hope and yet can foster despair. It locates us in time and traps us at the same time. The family teaches us about obligation and forces us to be individuals. It encourages us to learn, but only of certain things. The family is peaceful and potentially violent. It is about love, but can engender hate.

The family is humanity's teacher and the curriculum is life. What we make of it, we make of it, we make of our lives.

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF DR. DOROTHY RICH
Education and Families

Dr. Dorothy Rich - President and Founder, the Home and School Institute, Washington, D.C.; she was creator of numerous educational programs for diverse audiences and recipient of four educational writing awards.

PRESENTATION:

EDUCATION AND FAMILIES: An Intimate Partnership

For twenty-five years, I have specialized in nurturing the abilities of families to help their children learn and to achieve in school. It has been a lonely profession. There are so few of us in the field because while there is a good deal of rhetoric about the importance of parent involvement in children's education--there has been little action and even less sustained funding.

In a recent analysis prepared for policymakers, The Forgotten Factor in School Success-The Family, I identified a startling parent gap in the education reform movement. Those of us here today have been working to fill that gap, and so I am especially delighted to be with you.

In the mid 60s, when I started the programs of the Home and School Institute (HSI)--I was told that schools are IT, that they can do everything, that I shouldn't be talking about family.

In the mid 80s, I'm told that schools are weak and that families are important, but that there's no one out there to work with.

I didn't believe what was said to me in the 1960s and I don't believe what I hear about the weak school and the nonexistent family today.

What I believe now is surprisingly (even to me) the same as I believed in the 60s when I began this work--I believe that both home and school continue to be powerful institutions. But, there is another significant, overlooked force in our children's education. It's the communities we live in. The real, best, and only hope for improved education is to unite the educational forces of home, school, and community in working together.

No one, least of all me, says it is easy. It is more complex than adding an hour to the school day or setting up a teacher career ladder. While these are worthy objectives, they do not answer deeper concerns about student motivation, confidence, self-esteem, and love of learning.

The problem in the United States today is not that our children don't learn how-to read. They do. Education research indicates that most of our children do learn the basics of reading and math in the early grades. What happens is that many children do not keep on reading and wanting to learn more.

In the few minutes I have today, I will try to distil what I have learned about the intimate partnership between education and families and provide some specific strategies with the goal of raising student motivation and achievement through family involvement.

Primarily, we need a redirection of effort to take advantage of what is now known about how children learn and how families live and work today.

This is a time of enormous crisis and enormous opportunity. More and more people, inside and outside the school walls are saying, "We can't do it alone." For years, I've been trying to get that message across and frankly not always with a great deal of success. I talked about and designed programs for teamwork and partnership. For many, these seemed like nice things but not really necessary.

Today, the headlines are telling another story. And it's not just the schools asking for help from "outside." The police are saying they can't do it alone. The health officials are saying they can't do it alone. The major institutions of our society are calling upon the public to join hands, to get involved, to help solve the problems we face.

As I see it, the macro institutions--law, health and education--are turning to the mighty micro -- the family. This is the opportunity we can and must take advantage of.

A great deal is already known about the importance of the family as educator. Yet, the focus for and the responsibility for educational reform has centered almost exclusively on the school.

While there have been specific efforts to work with families, they are fragmentary and come and go, usually go in times of budget cutbacks. Schools have not yet been supported, funded or encouraged to work with the home or with other community agencies in an ongoing, systematic manner.

This "parent gap" in policies and programs of the education reform movement is explainable: First, there's been a basic lack of knowledge about the research and experience which point to the significance of the family in the education of children.

Another reason is the appealing myth that parent* involvement doesn't cost money, that it's all free or should be free, and that it comes naturally especially to mothers. (*Note: When I use the word "parent" I am referring to all adults who care for children at home and in the community.)

Once involvement programs are set in place, the work done by adults and children at home is free. What isn't free are the resources needed to put these programs into place, for personnel (such as home-school workers to reach out to families) and for materials families use at home (such as home activities and parenting information).

If parent involvement is important to children's school success--and it's now known that it is--then parent involvement must be seen as basic to the schooling process.

Briefly, what is already known about family involvement programs is that they do help resolve major school problems.

Research evidence indicates that parent involvement raises the academic achievement of students; improves attitudes and performance of children in school; helps parents understand the work of the schools; enables parents and children to communicate more and show their caring toward each other; and builds school-community relationships in an ongoing, problem-preventing way.

In a state of Maryland study, parents who participated in involvement programs rated their teachers higher in overall teaching ability. Teachers who work at parent involvement were considered better teachers than those who remained more isolated from families.

The evaluation of our Institute's multilingual project reported additional payoffs: more parents came to school conferences and more parents contacted the school regarding their child's school work or absence from school.

DR. DOROTHY RICH

Educators are working with a new kind of family today--not necessarily worse or better, but different. Without going into elaborate demographic detail, it is sufficient to note that a majority of mothers today holds jobs outside the home and that single parenting is on the increase. The good news is that even under the constraints of limited time and financial pressures, today's parents care about and value their children's schooling. After years of heavy dependence on the school to do everything, I can report the public appears ready to assume more responsibility for what's happening to children.

This is clear in our national program, New Partnerships for Student Achievement which our Institute is conducting under a MacArthur Foundation grant. Major national community organizations in dozens of cities are voluntarily providing family-as-educator materials to their members and to the wider community. They are forming a new network of support for families and for schools.

What's needed now is not just support for the school, but a new kind of support for the educational role of the family. It is increasingly clear based on research and experience, that priority attention should be given to developing the kind of participation which directly involves parents in enhancing the education of their own child.

The reasons for this position are at least two fold. First, it is the approach which a continuing line of research indicates is more directly linked to improved academic achievement. And, secondly and very important, it offers the greatest opportunity for equity for widespread and sustained involvement. Programs which require attendance at meetings or school activities during the day will necessarily have limited participation. The need to reach out to single parents and to families in which both parents are employed is a special concern. Furthermore, this approach appeals to the most basic parental motivation for involvement in the first place--the desire to help one's child do better.

What do I mean in practical terms when I speak of the family's educational role? It's old-fashioned because it will sound like what parents have always done. And it's very modern because many parents today never learned or have forgotten what they had to do at their home to pave the way for their child's success in school.

Let me amplify my approach to the role of the family in education. Effective involvement today must provide learning strategies for families to use at home. These should reinforce but not duplicate the role of the school. Today's involvement must be broad-based using the school, community agencies, and businesses to "deliver support" to families in their important role in the education of their children.

I will outline now a three part program to mobilize families and communities in support of education. As a concept and as a plan, I call it Learning City. It's an infrastructure connecting schooling to the rest of society, and the places where children spend more time than they do in school.

PART I. SET THE STAGE WITH AN INFORMATION CAMPAIGN ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY'S EDUCATIONAL ROLE

Surveys reveal that parents are willing to help their children learn and improve their school work. All parents seek greater status and a sense that society values the important work they are doing in child-rearing. "At risk" parents need to know they have strengths to help their children. Employed mothers need time-efficient ways to help their children.

Launch a local publicity campaign to educate the public on HOME: A SPECIAL LEARNING PLACE. Signs, slogans, home learning activities through the radio, TV, back-of-the bus signs, messages on grocery bags and on construction fences can carry the message with this general theme: Home + School = Learning.

Start a media campaign showing fathers working with children. Public service messages can appear on TV during football games and other sport broadcasts. This enhances the image of the "macho" man as caregiver to the children.

Encourage ongoing contributions of business to the work of schools. This goes beyond volunteers for the classroom. It can mean time off for employees to participate in parent/teacher conferences and the distribution of parenting information to help employees reduce family stress due to work/home conflicts.

Provide information for families in easy-to-read, easy-to-use leaflets. Have these available from every school and also from places like doctors' offices and supermarkets. Families everywhere have similar needs for similar kinds of information. They want to know how to help their children learn ... now!

PART II. ESTABLISH A PARENT EDUCATION DELIVERY SYSTEM

Support family involvement as an integral and funded part of school services. Help schools recognize the family as a system--a system for teaching and learning across the grades in all subjects. As for an Office for Family Involvement in the school system to support home-school liaison work at every school. Train para-professionals for the specific job for connecting home and school. Establish Family Resource Centres at schools, perhaps staffed by senior citizens, where parents can meet to get information and materials on childrearing and education.

Provide teachers with training and information to help them work effectively with families. Part of the new role for teachers today is to facilitate what is learned outside the classroom with what is learned inside. This means working with adults as well as with children. Teachers need training for this. Experience with HSI School and Family-Community Involvement training for educators indicates that teachers have not been prepared for work with families. Teachers need to know the research about families as educators, and they need to know the strategies for reaching and teaching adults.

Provide ways for families to help each other. Find ways to support the work of parent-to-parent programs. Consider establishing peer-support groups for teen parents, for single and working parents. Outside groups such as "Parents Without Partners" can be encouraged to organize and hold meetings at school and to focus on school-family concerns.

Cooperate with community based efforts, such as New Partnerships to assist schools. Find a variety of ways involving service organizations throughout the community to provide information to parents about their significant educational role.

Establish ties with preschool and day care programs. A majority of early childhood care is offered in family day care homes. This before-school period is vital to the success of children in school. Arrange visits to schools for family day care providers. Preschool caregivers need to see how their work ties in with the work of the schools.

Involve senior citizens and non-parents. Senior citizens, growing in number, more vigorous and healthy in later years than ever before, are often an untapped resource for helping families and teachers. The HSI Senior Corps curriculum, field-tested in the inner city, provides a model for communities to consider. It is a structured basic skills curriculum for seniors to use in working with students with special needs in class. It also provides complementary activities for the student's family to use at home. The family and the senior form a team to help the student overcome learning difficulties.

Provide support for complementary efforts to schools from hospitals, child care agencies--all who work with children start with children's earliest years: Support information for parents about their significant educative role from a child's birth on.

Schooling needs to be thought about in the same way as football games and orchestras. We can't play a football game alone, no matter how good a player we are. And we can't play a symphony without the rest of the orchestra. Right now, schools are being asked to play the game without all the players on the field--and that's no way to win.

Educators must see themselves, not just as classroom leaders, but as community leaders, corralling and connecting the people outside the classroom who have so much to impact on how children learn inside the classroom. Everyone has a part to play. When structured effectively, these parts combine and complement one another. For example, in the last few years the National Education Association sent Institute learning activities from teachers to thousands of families in 17 states. The work of the teacher and parent does not overlap in these programs. Each plays as a member of the team, and response is overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

PART III. PROVIDE LEARNING ACTIVITIES THAT FAMILIES AND OTHERS CAN USE WITH CHILDREN

Among the most popular Institute programs are school-to-home curricula, composed of home learning activities ("recipes") that families use to supplement and extend the work of the school. I have to admit that when I first started developing "recipes" 25 years ago and talking about how spoons and clocks and bikes and all the usual paraphernalia of the home can help teach children important skills, I mumbled the work "recipe" under my breath, almost apologizing for it. It sounded too homespun to be educationally significant, certainly compared to all the formal education studies and treatises.

I've stopped apologizing. The parents and the children in our Institute programs opened my eyes. They told me and my colleagues and anyone else who would listen that doing these "recipes" with their children (which take only a few minutes a day) helped to change their lives at home. Even I'm surprised when I hear parents tell about their experiences in words like these: "I see my kids in a new way." "Now I can teach my children."

The children have a more poignant response. Over and over they say, "These recipes made my parents have time for me."

I believe and I feel that you also believe that what's really important in education is that after our children learn to read that they actually read. After our children learn to do math, they actually do math.

To do, this, our children need what I have come to call **MegaSkills**. This is the title of my new book, (Houghton Mufflin 1988). MegaSkills are the enabling qualities, the big basics, the special energies needed to learn everything else--confidence, motivation, effort, responsibility, initiative, perseverance, caring, teamwork, common sense and problem solving. If you have these MegaSkills - in whole or even in part - chances of being able to learn everything and anything else are enormously increased.

In the current discussion about education reform, these big basics, these inner engines of learning, have not received the attention they deserve. Some might ask if these can be taught. The good news is Yes. The bad news is that they grow slowly, in large part outside the classroom. They develop through practice, and not even the best school can teach them alone.

"Recipes" sound almost too easy to do any good. But they are powerful, not just because of what they teach but because of what happens when adults and children get together. These activities are not traditional homework. They use ordinary objects and daily routines. For example, in the book MegaSkills, a recipe named, What Do I Do Right? helps parents teach confidence; Shopping Centre Stroll teaches motivation; Do and Not Die teaches effort; Promises, Promises teaches responsibility; Junk Day teaches initiative; False Friends; Alcohol and Tobacco teaches: perseverance; How Does It Feel? teaches caring; Divide and Conquer teaches teamwork; Yesterday and Today teaches common sense; Decisions Aren't Easy teaches problem solving.

I've come to realize that our Institute programs--which I thought were teaching basic skills--were also teaching love ... the love of learning. We've learned that families, after the program, go on to making up their own "recipes." Children watch TV less and read more. Parents and kids are experiencing the joy of shared productive effort.

Current Momentum and Opportunity

I don't know if children in the past had more MegaSkills than children today. That's beside the point anyway, the concern now is that our children, to become successful learners and workers in the 21st century, need them more. What our children need is the ability to learn and keep learning. Our children need the ability to take what they know and put it together in new ways to solve new unforeseen problems. To be useful for the 1990's and beyond, education has got to transfer. We don't know the specific situations our children will face or even the machines they will use. What we know for sure is that our children will need to be able to use and adapt what they learn today.

In conclusion, be encouraged ---

- Know that when we make the effort to involve parents, even when it is hard and especially when it's hard, we are doing absolutely the right thing.
- Know that there are relatively easy things we can do that make a lot of difference. Small things mean a lot--and it doesn't always take a lot of time to do a lot of good.

The opportunities are here, even in a period of stress and change. Helping families help their children learn is one of our major opportunities!

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF KEITH COOPER
Education and Families

Keith Cooper - Executive Director of the Children's Home for mentally disturbed children in Winnipeg; and served twenty-six years as an educator-superintendent, principal and teacher.

PRESENTATION:

Does the education system and its member educational practitioners accept the role as partner; as part of the whole community involved in addressing a broad range of issues, many of which are "non-educational?" If that is in fact the case, if that is in fact a basic assumption, perhaps we should first check it out and be sure. Assumptions or what we might call values are the bases for our behaviours and the premises on which our systems are said to be designed. If the "bottom line" assumptions are at variance with what we enunciate, then our behaviours will be incongruent; we and our systems will deliver a multitude of mixed messages, and we may never understand why. If schools are closed edifices within the community, placed there so that educators may develop skills and delivery content to the children who arrive, and the expectation/assumption is that they arrive with no baggage from outside, then not only is no partnership possible, it is not even desirable. In reality, it is unthinkable. When we think of the schools as we know them, which assumption seems to be more true?

What do we assume about families--the conventional traditional working father, homemaker mother, devoted to and involved with their children (and in a self-contained dwelling with a yard and pets) or have we yet come to terms with families in which two parents work, single parent families because of death or divorce, blended families, families in which parents live in an "unsanctified" common-law relationship, families who live on welfare, single parent families in which the choice to receive social assistance provides an opportunity to parent, and a tad better lifestyle than a job at minimum wage.

The school is the only social institution with which all families and children come into contact. That fact provides an opportunity for awareness of many of the socio-economic realities and dynamics within the community. Educational staff must learn to listen and thus be aware of these realities, both family-specific and more general. It is fundamental that there must also be an awareness of the services available within the community, for purposes of consultation and linkage. A willingness and ability to listen to the child's or families' concerns and agendas may provide some rather shocking insight into the community's view of the school. One prevalent perception is that the school "summons" people over problems which are the fault of the child and family. How many people here have ever received formal or official communication from a school affirming effort and excellence, or good citizenship on the part of a student? Over the years, over and over again, I hear about single parent mothers who get mail addressed to Mr. and Mrs. What kind of a message does this convey? Or, it is too bad Nellie doesn't have a father. One of the more telling experiences for me as a principal was to hear that most of the parents came to parent-teacher interviews, "but not the ones we wanted to see." Let me leave who they were to your imagination, but they were not "A" students. Picture yourself as a parent (and I have been there) called to a meeting including a collegiate vice-principal, seven teachers and a guidance counsellor, who proceeded to tell me what was wrong with my daughter. I left that meeting saying to myself, "Goodness, gracious, that is certainly a helping place!!"

Simply, schools cannot and need not be able to mobilize family resources or be in partnership with other service agencies unless they are perceived to be caring and trustworthy. That means the ability to hear anger, to be the receiver of it, displaced as it may be, without rising to combat. If we are unable to perform in that way, we will perpetuate the trend of "blaming the victim."

There is no doubt in my mind the climate of this year and this decade has brought realities and trends which inhibit community partnership. The financial squeeze has brought with it the need for accountability and rationalization of expenditures. That has meant an emphasis on the concept of equity which seems to be translated to mean that everyone gets the same. All manner of work has been and is being done to develop formulae which will ensure equity and accountability. These developments have resulted in a drive for tidiness, and a retrenchment by social organizations within clearly defined areas of "turf." These are very real systemic issues. What do they say about our basic assumptions about education, service and families? It has often been the case, I would submit, that community partnership and support to families did take place and is taking place in very effective ways, but often in spite of the system. That may well become more and more difficult as the turf identification and accountability demands increase. Nonetheless, it seems to me there are ways. The system assumptions need to be challenged. If there is will in the system, there are possibilities.

The introduction of "site grants" on a demonstration basis.

If a school staff were to develop a presentation which proposed a community outreach/partnership thrust which demonstrated the possibility of discussion from the "care mill" and more immediate access to service, and a much less restrictive use of the school, it just might fly.

A school and an agency might sponsor and collaborate on programs for parents or even families. School staff can become important parts of neighbourhood block parent organizations.

School staffs might well re-examine their approach to parent-teacher interviews and commit time and energy to meaningful conversation with parents.

What this means certainly is that the role of the teacher must be seen to include important functions that are additional to pupil contact time and lesson preparation. School boards must validate that role by including it in their workload formulae. Similarly, professional teachers and their professional association must validate that role.

Just another word about parents and their involvement as educators and advocates. Do we really believe it? Or is it the case, particularly with children and/or families with problems, that we want the parents to go away so we can teach children to unlearn the bad teaching and learn the good stuff? My own belief, out of my own experience, leads me to say that, however we characterize families, they do care about their children. They may not demonstrate it in ways we recognize or ways which are appropriate, but the preponderant majority do care. If we are going to encourage parents to be advocates for their children, please be prepared for the fact that we may not like that for which they advocate. They may even disagree with us. They may tilt at sacred rules which they view to be nonsensical. They might even think they know as much (or even more) about their children than we do. Are we really prepared to enter that arena? That creates a whole different ball game. We may have to learn to negotiate, to give up our professional "rightness" and help parents to do what they want to do for their children. And we may be right and they may be wrong! Can we say so and back off and continue to work in partnership?

This presentation has not been an attempt to glorify parents. People who are parents can be as misguided, stubborn, selfish and destructive as professionals (and it's entirely possible that many of us are parents too). My experience in the last few years with victims of familial abuse, neglect and homelessness, often resulting in delinquency, criminal behaviour, drug and child street prostitution makes it impossible for me to glorify all parents and has caused me to be graphically aware of shockingly destructive acts that take place inside many homes in all areas of my city and province. And yet I also have learned that however the family may be categorized, and no matter how important it is to protect children from these destructive parents, it is still the only family they have and the children know it. That is a reality with which we must come to terms.

These are strange and frightening times for many families and their children. We are experiencing over and over our vulnerability as persons, families, communities and societies. A vulnerability to circumstances over which we have little or no control. The heightened stress and the resulting shattering of family fabric is more and more apparent. Yet at the same time, publicists and spokespersons for governments are telling us repeatedly that there is no more money, therefore we must be accountable and set priorities. And yet, nations mobilized hundreds of thousands, in fact millions of dollars to save three whales. I want to state for the record, that I have nothing against whales. In fact, some of my best friends are whales. But their needs don't compare, in my view, with the needs of fourteen- and fifteen-year-old child prostitutes, three-year veterans who escape from the horror and brutality of their lives through drug use and continue to prostitute themselves to earn the money to buy the drugs so they can escape. In the city in which I live, the big high profile event is the coming of the pandas, and they are here at a cost of approximately two million dollars. That cost is justified because the influx of tourists and the economic spin-off will pay for those costs. Is it not every bit as true that children and families (have we not been told this is the bedrock of a healthy flourishing society) who receive support and service and become productive and healthy will pay for themselves every bit as much (could I suggest even more) than the pandas?

I said earlier these were frightening times for vulnerable children and families. It is even more frightening that many human service professionals accept or believe the fact that money for these people cannot be available.

Many of us have seen and marvelled at the resilience of children who have survived through their own hell. Community partnership requires a commitment, a commitment to persons, to families and their children, a commitment to advocacy, that goes beyond professional role and current systemic rules. If we really try it, we might even like it. If we try hard enough, it might over time become the norm.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF JUDITH L. MACBRIDE-KING
Work and Family Life

Judith MacBride-King - Research Associate, Conference Board of Canada. Currently researching dynamics of work and family from the perspectives of Canadian employers, employees and unions.

PRESENTATION:

The Canadian Corporate Response To Workers with Family Responsibilities

I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak with you today about some of the research we, at The Conference Board of Canada, have carried out with respect to the dynamic occurring of the work/family interface.

Before I begin to discuss our research program entitled Canadian Work Environments and Changing Family Structures, let me briefly tell you about the Conference Board and the Compensation Research Centre (the group within which I work).

The Conference Board of Canada is a national membership-based, non-policy prescriptive, not-for-profit research institute located on Ottawa. The Board analyzes a number of key issues facing business and government today and disseminates the information through a variety of techniques (meetings, conferences, publications).

The Compensation Research Centre (or the CRC) is a separately funded research group in the Board. Our focus is on compensation, human resources, and industrial relations.

Despite our mandate, I am sometimes asked why The Conference Board of Canada is carrying out a study on work and family. That is, how is this issue related to the business of doing business in Canada?

Part of the answer lies in the dramatic demographic and social changes which have occurred in Canada over the past 2 or 3 decades.

Today only a minority of Canada's families are the "Leave it to Beaver" type -- those where the sole breadwinner is the male, with the stay at home wife. There are more sole-earner, single parent families, more dual-earner families and more women in the labour force that ever before.

The dramatic increase in the number of women (particulary mothers of young children) in the labour force and the accompanying social redefinition of what constitutes the appropriate roles of men and women in the work place and at home, not only creates challenges for individuals, but also for their employers.

Twenty or thirty years ago, an employee (usually a male) would go to work comfortable in the knowledge that his spouse would manage the household and care for their children in his absence. The employer had a worker at work who, because of supports at home, could (or so it was assumed) devote his energies and thoughts to the job, with relatively few interruptions.

Times have changed. Today almost 60 percent of Canadian women work outside the home for pay, and The Conference Board predicts that by the year 1993 women's participation will increase to a level of 63.1 percent. The single largest group entering the labour force is women who have children under the age of 3. The 1986 census revealed that almost half of husband and wife families were dual earner. Compare this to 20 percent only twenty-eight years ago.

The challenge facing the majority of working Canadians today is managing their various roles and responsibilities--finding a comfortable "fit" between their work and non-work obligations. The difficulties employees experience in balancing their work and family lives may affect their physical and emotional well-being, and consequently, can also have a distinct impact on the bottom line of organizations.

Studies in the United States and preliminary data from The Conference Board's survey of Canadian workers suggest that the difficulties individuals experience in trying to fulfil a complex myriad of roles and responsibilities can translate into high turnover rates in organizations, increased absenteeism, and a reduction in the number of hours or days an employee is willing or able to work.

In these days of labour shortages (particularly in certain sectors of our economy and certain parts of the country), the dual issues of retaining and recruiting employees are particularly important to organizations. Operational effectiveness may suffer when companies lose valuable, experienced people.

Some organizations in Canada have responded to the challenge of the changing labour force, and given the demographic and social changes and projections for the future, many are re-evaluating their benefit structures to account for workers who have family responsibilities.

I would at this point like to stress that we, at the Conference Board, perceive the issue of work and family as more that a so-called "women's issue". It is a "family" issue (both men and women participate in families) and it is an organizational issue.

As we believed that the issue was (and is) of importance to individuals and their employers, we developed and undertook a major research program which looks at work/family dynamics from the perspectives of employers, employees and unions in Canada.

We have surveyed Canadian organizations regarding the policies, practices and benefits they have in place for workers with family responsibilities, and about the degree to which they feel certain family-related supports have contributed to their organizations' effectiveness. In a few moments I will be talking to you about some of our findings regarding the Canadian corporate response to societal changes.

In addition to our survey of employers, we have also surveyed over 11,000 Canadians regarding their work and family roles. In our research, we define "family responsibilities" as home maintenance and housework, as well as childcare and (importantly) "dependant care" - the care of elderly, disabled or infirm family members.

In our survey of individuals, we are exploring the extent to which family responsibilities affect persons at work in terms of their own well-being (that is, the stress or anxiety they may experience), and in terms of their advancement opportunities, within their jobs or organizations. A key focus of this phase of the research is to examine the extent to which an employee's responsibilities outside of work affect his/her performance at work, and the degree to which the difficulties associated with balancing work and family contribute to employee absenteeism

Although we have completed the survey of individuals, not all of the data collected has been analyzed. Therefore, I will not focus too much on what we are learning from employees at this stage, but will as we move on in the discussion, mention some of the early trends we are seeing.

The third aspect of the research program involves in-depth discussions with unions in Canada. Later this summer or early in the fall, we will be carrying out interviews with various union leaders in Canada to determine:

a) the degree to which union representatives feel that this is of importance to their members;

b) the degree that the issue of work and family will become an issue in the future negotiations, and;

c) the attitudes of unions about their responsibility and the responsibility of others in assisting their members in finding a better balance between work and family.

Corporate Response to Workers with Family Responsibilities

I would like to move on now to look at the Canadian corporate response to workers with family responsibilities.

The companies responding to our survey employ over 1.1 million Canadians in over 3,000 work-sites across Canada. The policies, practices and benefits described, therefore, have an impact upon many individuals and they have the potential to affect thousands more. Not only do employment policies affect themselves, but also these policies affect the family members of employees.

Results from The Conference Board survey indicate that only a relatively small number of Canadian organizations have implemented various programs for working parents or adult caregivers. Having said that, however, we also know that there has been an increase in the number of companies offering a variety of family-supportive benefits, particularly in the area of childcare. Further, some organizations are evaluating the situations in their organizations now, and are considering the various options available to them. For example, up to 8.5 percent of the organizations which were surveyed are considering the future implementation of some form of childcare benefit.

Childcare

Childcare information and referral services **were** provided by almost 8.5 per cent of the organizations surveyed. Almost 8 per cent offered assistance to employees with sick children. About 5 per cent had some form of support for childcare centres (that is, they either had an on-site centre or they provided a subsidy to the centre or to the employee to help offset the cost of childcare). Parent education seminars were organized in almost 5 per cent of the organizations.

Dependent Care

Some employees have recognized the stresses and responsibilities associated with the care of elderly, infirm or disabled relatives, and they have responded to the needs of caregiving employees.

The issue of elderly care will undoubtedly grow in importance over the next few years. As a population, were are aging, and the life expectancy of Canadians has increased -- our elderly are living longer.

In fact, many people in Canada today provide care for an elderly family member while they still have children at home. The dual responsibilities of the individuals in this group -- known as the "sandwich generation" -- no doubt take a greater toll on caregiver well-being.

In our survey of individuals, up to 20.5 per cent of those surveyed in one organization indicated that they or others in their households provide care for an elderly, disabled or infirm relative. The average overall to date is 16.7 per cent.

In terms of the organizational response to the needs of these employees, we found that 6 per cent of the surveyed organizations offer elderly care information and related services. Up to 2.5 per cent provide the employee assistance in caring for elderly relatives, either in their own homes or in institutions.

In addition, some companies (about 9.5 per cent) also provide information regarding the care of disabled persons or persons with special needs.

Furthermore, a significant number of employers offer a variety of services to employees through Employee Assistance Programs. About three-quarters of the respondents (72 percent) have some form of EAP, and almost half of those who do also extend at least some of the services offered through EAP's to the families of employees.

These programs and benefits are only some of the ways organizations have responded to their changing work forces. Some companies have responded in other ways and have implemented various policies and practices regarding alternative working arrangements and leaves for workers with family responsibilities.

Alternative Work Arrangements and Leaves

With respect to alternative work arrangements, almost half of the employers we surveyed indicated that they have instituted flexible working hours in their organizations. This is an increase over previous years. Almost thirty per cent offer the option of part-time work with pro-rated benefits. Over one-quarter offer some employees the option of job-sharing. In addition, 10.5 per cent of the companies have implemented work-at-home arrangements.

With respect to leaves or time-off for family or personal reasons (as opposed to parental leaves specifically), over half of the employers told us that their organizations have some form of special family related leave. Almost one in two indicated that they permit employees to use their personal sick leave for family reasons, and slightly over 8 percent offer "other parental leave" (i.e. child nurturing leave).

When looking at parental leaves, we found that one in two of the organizations offer mothers extended maternity leaves and one in four pre-maternity leaves. Almost 18 per cent offer fathers time off upon the birth of a child, and over one-third of the respondents offer an adoption leave.

Short Profile of Organizations Offering a Variety of Benefits

As a very general statement (there are slight deviations from the pattern), a greater percentage of the larger more affluent organizations or public sector organizations offered many of the various benefits and leaves mentioned. This is not to say that private sector organizations are not involved, only to say that proportionately public sector employers were more likely to be.

Based on preliminary runs of the data we collected from employees, we are finding that the more difficult it is for individuals to balance work and home and the more stress they experience in trying "to do it all", the more likely they are to be absent from work.

Having said that, then, the questions remains as to how effective these programs and benefits have been for the organizations which have implemented them. Most of those we surveyed believed these supports have, in fact, been effective in alleviating certain human resource problems or issues within their organizations.

That is, generally those employers who offered childcare supports, alternative working arrangements, and a variety of leaves found them to be particularly effective in the recruitment and retention of employees, in reducing employee stress, maintaining employee morale, and in reducing the rates of absenteeism in the organizations. These organizations perceive clear advantages in offering such programs.

Conclusion

To conclude, the issue of work and family is and (given projections in demographic trends) will continue to be an important one as the years go by. Forums or conferences like this provide us opportunities to learn from each other and to recognize others' needs and points of view. This is an extremely valuable experience for us as individuals, managers, and employers.

My thanks to the provincial premiers of Canada for initiating this important symposium about families, and to the organizers of this event.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF ELDON M. FERGUSON
Work and Family Life

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Eldon M. Ferguson - Independent human resources consultant. Human Services Planning, Evaluation and program/organizational development, with policy specializations in health, disabilities, income support and employment.

PRESENTATION:

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. I stand here before you asking myself what does a number crunching Chartered Accountant have to offer to a symposium about families. As I think about it the answers become obvious by looking at what we as a professional firm of Chartered Accountants do in the areas of families and working life. My talk this afternoon will break into roughly three parts. I will talk about Personal & Family Counselling programs. I will talk about our Working Parents Committee. And I will then get on my own "soap box" and do a bit of editorializing. So first the Personal & Family Counselling Program or Employees Assistance Program:

Many of us, regardless of our positions, face a variety of difficulties in our daily lives. Such as emotional distress, death of a loved one, financial or legal problems, marriage and family difficulties, or problems caused by alcohol or drug abuse. Some of these difficulties may not be our own but rather those of family members. Generally we are able to deal with their day to day situations and manage them successfully, however, sometimes they grow beyond our capabilities. In these instances the resulting anxiety can drain us of our energy and effectiveness and cause our stress levels to go out of sight. The purpose of our Employees Assistance Program is to provide confidential assistance to our employees and members of their immediate families to help resolve these difficulties that affect their personal lives.

Six years ago we engaged the Family Service Association of Metropolitan Toronto to provide us with an in-house counselling service. This was done on a test basis for Toronto office and a year later we made the program available through professional agencies across the country. The program covers, and again I stress, on a very confidential basis the following areas:

1. **Stress Management** - Although we cannot always change the things that cause stress in our personal lives we can modify our individual reactions to it and by doing this greatly reduce the impact of the stress.

2. **Marital Difficulties** - Marital problems can have a devastating affect on families and individuals. Often skilled marital counselling can resolve these issues. We often find that when people talk about these types of problems the anxiety level is greatly reduced.

3. **Troubled Children** - The troubled child is a case of learning difficulties or errant behaviour for one reason or another. In this area outside professional help is a tremendous support for the other members of the family involved.

4. **Alcohol and Drug Abuse** - Probably the best know of the family problems is related to some sort of addiction. The members of the family not involved with the abuse are often affected to a greater extent than the individual involved. Our counsellor has dealt with both the abuse and the other members of the family. Again, outside professional counselling is a tremendous support to people suffering this type of stress in their personal lives.

The counsellor is available in our offices one day a week but on a seven day week basis through an emergency line. We feel that giving some visibility and yet respecting the confidentiality is the keynote to such a program. About 65% of our people use the services off-site, that is outside the offices. (Tell no-name war stories of some of the things that our counsellors have had to deal with).

Part 2 of my talk is about our Working Parents Committee. About four years ago we realized that with the profession shifting from a predominantly male profession to a point where now the younger members of the profession are about 45% female. Back when I was one of these younger members of the profession the percentage of females in the profession was about 2%. My own view on this shift is that it will continue and will become, over the course of time, one of those professions which could very well be predominantly female. There are many factors that lead to this, not the least of which is, the flexibility in career and working arrangements that can be made. We have various demands on our people at different times of the year. This type of arrangement can lend itself very well to a variety of work arrangements and I think we have tried just bout every one of them with varying degrees of success. But first a little more about the committee. We spent a long time trying to define what our mandate should be. Most members of the committee wanted to deal with the global problems of work and family life. I think I coerced them into agreeing with me that first we had to deal with the hard-nosed issues of maternity leaves and alternative work arrangements. I don't mind telling you that in the beginning I was sceptical about what we could or should be doing. My views totally changed by the end of the year and a half of deliberations I had to be24Xcarefulnot to get on my soap box too often because I would risk losing credibility. I will talk a little more about these problems when I come to editorialize.

Our committee put forward recommendations which were accepted by our Operations Policy Committee (i.e. Committee that runs the firm). The recommendations were simply that maternity leave was automatically six months, unless negotiated otherwise. There would be a strong commitment from the firm to part-time and various other job sharing arrangements. There is a very necessary caveat in that we are in a service business and so things must make some sense from a client service point of view. Having said that, there has not been very many cases which couldn't be worked to the benefit of the individual and the firm in serving our clients. In line with the commitment to various alternative working arrangements is our policy of sitting down and predetermining objectives against which people will be measured. It is totally unfair to use the same global evaluation process for people who are working part-time. What we have decided is that our global evaluation process is fine and we think it works quite will but we should define which areas the individual should apply his or her attention during the periods when she/he is working less than full-time. It is only fair to have an expectation of someone working 60% which is different from someone working 100%. The one think I learned very clearly in the committee is that the professional and intellectual commitment of the individual is 100%, the hours they put in may only be 60%. But he desire to learn and keep up to date on changes is totally the same, or maybe even a little higher because they feel they have something to prove, than it is for our full-time people. This has never been a concern of ours because of this commitment. Now maybe we have been somewhat lucky in that we deal with this in an environment where the people are strongly committed professionals. Having said that the same program is available to all of our staff, many of whom are secretarial and supervisory, but they to have a very strong professional commitment to the work they do. The third part of our Working Parents program is a child care referral services. Our staff can call to learn about child care in their neighbourhood. The service also provides for emergency child care. The individual pays for the child care - we pay the fee for the information services.

Now for a bit of editorializing. Some of the things I have learned to deal with in our firm over the last few years are things like dealing with the "super mom" syndrome which every expectant mother and new mother at some point in time feels she is, or maybe it's she feels she has to be, and in fact she probably does have to be. I think today there is far more pressure on families and this pressure will increase. In my mind this is as simple as moving from an agrarian to an urban population.

If you think back to who people grew up and lived in rural areas there were a lot of things to keep people busy and healthy - growing your own food, working in the fields, raising the animals, going to school. Now the only one of those that survived is going to school and we spend fewer hours there. We are more hep on nutrition so our children are healthy and they have a lot of energy and what do they do, burn it off watching television - no. This creates pressures and those pressures become family pressures because most of our young people still grow up in families of one manner, shape or form. I think in a lot of cases we older people, parents and others who are not parents, have lost the art of "hanging out" with young people. I think it is important to enter into their world and not try to bring them into our world. Do you really want to give them our world? I think they will live in a world that you and I can't begin to understand.

One of the biggest problems I ran into in my work on committees and Employees Assistance and Working Parents is trying to get people to recognize that men and women are different. The strongest resistance is from women. It wasn't me or Clarkson Gordon who decided that women should have the babies - God did it. But that does make women different and I think that in fighting for equality you have to be very careful especially in the corporate world. The women on our committee wanted us, in our deliberations, to consider and in fact have paternity leaves available. Well I don't know - maybe that will come one day but boy I don't think that we are ready for it. I think we would have terribly diluted our case if that view had carried that day. I can't remember who it was but I agree that women who want equality are aiming too low. I think the differences really have to be recognized, talked about, and only then we can say "How do we deal with it?" It has been my view for a long time that in any population treating everyone the same is totally and utterly unfair. We are not the same, we are all different one from the other. Every man is different from every other man and every woman from every other woman. Why would anyone want laws or rules that treat everybody the same. Surely that within acceptable parameters there can be room for recognition of the differing factors. If I could send you away with one thought I would send you away with "I am going to do two things. I am going to complement young people every chance I get, because you are automatically going to criticize them, I mean you don't have to think about that. But you do have to think to give the compliments. And I am going to spend time with them. I am going to listen. You can't sit down and say I want to talk to you and start negotiating. You have to win their confidence by sort of hanging out.

That doesn't mean going to the circus or going to the hockey game or those great things - no - just hang out. Go have an ice cream cone, sit in the park and throw pebbles in the water, relax, be a person. Let them see that you are a person and that you are okay. Then they will talk and then you can help them. Remember, all you can do is give them advice. You can't tell them what to do. They have to sort it out. I don't think there is enough listening in families. Just listen!

I say this as a long-time divorced person who has three sons that I am very proud of and very proud of the fact that for the last five years I have spend every second weekend commuting back and forth to Montreal to be with, and to listen to my boys and to watch them grow up. It is with a great deal of pride that I can stand here and say that I dearly love them and they are just fine, broken family or no broken family. I talk to them about the literature out there concerning children from broken homes and how it affects their lives. I talk to my boys about it and my 18 year old son put it in a pretty good perspective a couple of weeks ago when we were talking about it. He said "Well Dad, I never felt like I didn't have a father. I always knew you were there. I knew we didn't live together but I always knew you were there. I don't think I have anger at either you or mom. I love both of you." I am pretty proud that an 18 year old boy can say those things. But then it makes me awfully ashamed to think why can't everybody. What is so complicated? Relax, "hang out" or as my 18 year old loves to say "Be Cool". Be cool at work - be cool with your family - Relax.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF JOHN A. MILLS
Work and Family Life

John Mills - Manager, Employee Relations and Benefits, Xerox of Canada Inc. Responsible for benefits program, employee assistance, health services, working well and child care programs and services.

PRESENTATION:

Workshop on Work and Family Life. Balancing work and family responsibilities today...an overview of work accommodations and support programs for employees.

Xerox Canada's Employee Assistance Program.

In 1980, Xerox Canada put together a task force which, with the help and guidance of David Wright (then Executive Director of the Employee Assistance Division of the Family Service Association of Metropolitan Toronto) set about determining, through surveys and interviews, what kind of "Employee Assistance Supports" might be required within the company.

Two themes--which have endured since then and which hold as true today--emerged from the task force's investigation.

First, managers need help in managing employees with emotional and mental health problems.

The traditional management alternatives--ranging from rational manager:employee discussions, through persuasion and motivational pep-talks to job re-structuring and/or closely-monitored goal-setting--simply weren't producing enough of a positive change in job performance with such employees.

Second, employees need professional counselling to alleviate personal problems.

To most of you here today this will be old hat but for the task force it was a revelation indeed to gain insights such as these:

- Employee 'A' suffers depression for a month because of the death of a parent - job performance is adversely affected as a direct result.
- Employee 'B' consciously or unconsciously distorts his health condition in order to obtain and then to extend disability income - in order to avoid confronting poor job performance.
- Employee 'C', on disability because of stress, has to wait months to see a psychiatrist - and therefore remains an unproductive employee for an extended period.

The task force recommended that Xerox Canada should implement a pilot Employee Assistance Program in Toronto for 12 months with a counsellor being available to employees two days each week. A key decision was that ours would be an "External E.A.P.", with services being provided by or through the professionals of the Toronto FSA.

We agreed that, at the end of the 12 months, we would evaluate our experience with a view to extending the program to our employees across the country.

The idea was, you might say, to try it and see if we liked it.

The rest, you might also say, is history.

In an aside, I would note that the Xerox U.S.E.A.P., which pre-dates ours by several years, was initially focused on the problems of alcohol and drug abuse. From the very beginning, however, the Xerox Canada Program has been "broad-brush", offering counselling and assistance in all areas of personal difficulty.

FROM PILOT TO FULL-SERVICE

However, in all fairness, I must acknowledge that, although a partial program was made available across Canada in 1982, it wasn't until 1986 that the decision was finally made to go "full-service" in all our communities.

In early 1987, on-site training and orientation began for the 2,500 employees outside Toronto, from Halifax to Vancouver. Wherever possible, we involved a counsellor from the local FSA office in the sessions because, following the Toronto model, our local service provider was to be that Local FSA.

In addition to being the direct service provider throughout the greater Toronto area, the Metro Toronto FSA provides central co-ordination for the entire country-wide network--it is our interface to the Local FSAs; it collects program data and reports anonymous statistics to us, and it has general program accountability for providing direction or resolving problems.

Thus, it keeps me--the person with responsibility for overseeing the program on Xerox Canada's behalf--at arm's length from the employees using its services and supports.

And that's very important.

The key to the program working to the company's best advantage is employees' confidence that they can turn to their counsellor and know that their personal business will remain absolutely and strictly that--their own business.

COMPANY JOB PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS, INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL NEEDS

Our E.S.P. philosophy can be summarized as follows:

- Job performance is the company's business and its only proper concern

- Personal problems are the individual's business and not the company's proper concern.

Although I hope we're concerned for the individual employee and interested in supporting his well-being because we care, we must retain the appropriate objective focus--concern for job performance--or we'll likely soon trespass into areas of employees' lives where we shouldn't go.

We know that personal problems can and do adversely affect job performance but we now also know that ready access to professional services and appropriate treatment resources can and does result in a return to acceptable job performance--always more quickly and thoroughly than otherwise would have been the case and sometimes saving a situation which would have been unsalvagable.

Although we cannot prove it--that is, demonstrate its effects in measured terms--we're convinced that the E.A.P. has reduced turnover and absenteeism and perhaps also accidents and that it has increased productivity, safety and teamwork. All of these effects are both good for the company's bottom line and good for employees individually and overall.

SERVICES DELIVERY; PROGRAM PROVISIONS

The objective of the Xerox Canada E.A.P. is to provide a confidential counselling service to all employees, to retirees and to members of their immediate families--a service which will lead o the solving or problems which are adversely affecting their personal lives and their at-work effectiveness.

Under the program, professional counselling services are provided at no cost to the employee or family member for up to a maximum of 6 visits or meetings with the counsellor per year. Beyond that, depending on the particularities of the situation, another arrangement or other arrangements are made--including, as appropriate, some form of cost-sharing by the employee.

We speak of three types of "referral to the E.A.P.--three ways in which an employee might be introduced to the program.

First, the majority case, is the **voluntary referral** whereby, most typically, the employee(or family member) entirely of his own volition makes direct contact with the counsellor....phones the local F.S.A. office and says; "I'm a Xerox employee. I'd like to speak to the Xerox counsellor."

Second, it sometimes occurs that, in the course of a performance review a manager suspects--or an employee admits--that some personal problem is getting in the way of the job--and the manager suggests that the E.A.P. counsellor might be able to help. No conditions are attached by the manager, but that's what we call a **suggested referral**.

The third form of referral is the **management referral**, reserved for situations in which, usually involving a long-term employee, all other avenues for turning around unacceptable job performance have been exhausted. The guy's on the ropes and likely now to be terminated but we don't want to give up--yet.

Attending sessions with the E.A.P. counsellor doesn't in itself guarantee continued employment but failure to attend and failure to correct the job performance situation will result in termination.

But even with this, the crucial component of confidentiality is protected--to the company, the counsellor reports only that the employee did or did not attend the prescribed counselling sessions.

Within the framework provided by the first two--voluntary referral and the suggested referral--we try to encourage use of something called the "brief service". It's a sort of "nip-it-in-the-bud" approach. A "call sooner rather than later" idea.

Often, it's nothing more than a single conversation--ideally, a personal meeting but sometimes just a phone call--between counsellor and employee. We've found that it works well as a preventative measure and for that reason are making specific provision for the counsellor to be a regular on-site presence at our larger facilities, thus making it easy for employees to "stop by" for a visit.

CLIENT PROFILE; PROGRAM UTILIZATION

The E.A.P. client profile is that of "everyman". Managers, secretaries, sales reps, bargaining unit members in the manufacturing and distribution organizations, field service technicians; employees of all ages and years of service, their spouses and their children are all clients.

Nearly half the cases involve family members--either with the employee or alone--while the range of problems brought to the counsellor describes the human condition in our modern society--marital difficulties, parent-child conflicts, alcohol abuse, financial woes, concerns about caring for elderly parents, job stress.

Overall, each year approximately 8 per cent of employees turn to the E.A P. If this means that some 400 people were helped through a real or potential personal crisis and that job performance failure was either averted or restored--and I believe it does mean that--then the E.A.P. has made a marvellous contribution to the health of the organization and its employees.

VALUE ADDED: MANAGEMENT SUPPORT, EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION

While we still have a way to go in "spreading the word", especially amongst managers who could make more astute and more frequent use of the suggested referral, our E.A.P. undeniably has delivered significant value added to the company.

Managers now have someone to assist them in dealing with the trickier employee relations issues they encounter and employees feel a greater loyalty because the company shows that it cares.

Management support is firm and employee perception is positive.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

Who knows what the future will really bring but, in general, I believe that we must anticipate and work for greater "integration" between work and family--

-- Such things as improved information flow between work and family; extended support systems...child care and elder care, yes, but also(for example) peer support groups and even "Family Day" events at the workplace.

-- And for greater integration between the various workplace support programs--

--and that means active partnerships between professionals who work in the fields of health services, fitness, nutrition, child care and E.A.P. It means tearing down whatever professional jealousies may now exist so that, as partners, they can jointly better serve their clients.

However, in my own relatively untutored way, I've come to the conclusion that we're approaching a crisis--that may mean that we won't be able to meet those future needs.

In one sense, it's a looming cash crisis. It's my belief that, as positive and effective as it has been over the years, if our E.A.P. were ever to reach all those who could benefit from it--perhaps one in four of all employees--the expense budget as we now know it, wouldn't be able to stand it!

In another sense, however, it means that we must move from the mode of chasing problems with solutions and instead find ways of obtaining greater return for resources expended. We must learn how to devote our resources to--to spend our money on--education and prevention rather than on cures and, more specifically, on those programs which will have the greatest payback for both organization and individual.

But what and how?

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF FREDA STEEL
Law and the Family

Freda Steel - Associate Professor of Law, University of Manitoba. Author of numerous books and other publications addressing family law.

PRESENTATION:

I'm delighted to be with you here today in Regina at this very important but difficult conference. I've been sitting in on various sessions for the past two days, and I've been hearing a lot about families. A lot about encouraging, helping, supporting families. But I think what's become obvious to all of us is that at the present time, we do not have any consensus about what we consider to be a family, or which forms of the family we wish to encourage.

I think it's pretty clear that we no longer have the traditional family. We would all agree, from everything we have heard from this conference that the traditional husband goes out to work, the woman stays at home, 2.3 children go to school, no longer exists. Statistics Canada did a survey in 1986 that indicated that only 27% of Canadian families falls within that particular norm, and it's rapidly decreasing every year. We know that we have to move from the traditional concept of the family, but as of yet, we don't know where we want to go. We don't have a consensus and that's what we're trying to formulate, as I understand the objectives of this conference. We're trying to formulate a coherent family policy right now.

Now, it may be that we are not ever going to achieve a consensus on one particular form of the family, and perhaps we shouldn't, given our western tradition of tolerance in accepting a plurality of ideas. Perhaps what we need is to form some kind of parameters around some basic values so that, indeed, we may or may not want to accept the concept of homosexual marriages; we may or may not want to accept the idea of foster families as families that we wish to encourage, but sooner or later, we have to accept some basic, fundamental concepts of what we consider to be marriage, whether we wish to encourage marriage or not. Do we want common-law relationships? Do we want to equate them with marital relationships? We have to make some of those decisions before we can go on to introduce legislative reforms.

Now, as I understand it, each of us here today on the panel have been asked to serve certain functions. I am the academic, so I have been asked to give you a very, very sweeping idea of the history of family law--the evolution. I think it's very helpful for us whenever we are thinking about where we're going to go, to spend some time first in looking at where we've been. As has been said many times, those who refuse to understand history are doomed to repeat it. Therefore, I'd like to tell you a little bit about the evolution of family law.

I had a history professor whose favourite comment was, over and over again, that nothing was new under the sun. And if you take a look at the history of family law, you find that there are certain themes that re-occur, over and over again, over the centuries. Now, don't worry, I'm not going to go that far back in terms of centuries, but what I would like to do is take a look at some of those themes that seem to re-occur and take one or two areas in family law and trace them through.

There are several themes that we see in family law, but if I had to pick one, I think the major theme is the continuing debate between treating the family as a unit--a cohesive whole--and the state interacting with that family as a single entity; and, on the other hand, seeing the individuals in the family as individuals in their own right, granting them their own rights and equal status as individuals in society, and the state interacting with them as those individuals and not as a family.

Throughout history, we see that the legal system has wandered on a continuum between those two balances. I should point out that it's not simply historically in our civilization that we have gone between these two ends of the continuum. It's also culturally. I find very often that we are very centered on what happens in our North American culture. If we look to other family laws in other countries, we find again this continuum. Some of the Oriental cultures, for example, have always focused very strongly on treating the family as a cohesive unit, rather than on rights of the individuals. They, too, go on this continuum.

Let me take two areas of family law to trace this continuum. The first one that I will talk about is the issue of property within marriage--property holding. The second one I'd like to talk about is divorce and spousal maintenance.

Let me talk first about the issue of property. One thing that I've found in the practice of family law and in teaching family law is that we can do a lot of things to maintenance; we can do a lot of things to our children, but property is a concept that has a great deal of emotion in our culture. You deal with my property, and you are dealing with something very special to me. Now, traditionally, we inherited our law from England and, traditionally, early English matrimonial law treated the husband and wife as a single person, usually to the detriment of the wife, so that the continuum, several hundred years ago, was definitely in the state interacting with the family as one unit. They only saw the family as one, single, cohesive unit, that unit being represented by the husband. As a married woman, the wife lost most of her personal property. Her husband had the use and benefit of her real property. The husband and wife were considered one legal entity under the control of the husband. The children, as well, were84Xtreatednd considered as itemsp2044Xof property under the control of the husband. The wife had no issue of control with respect to the children. They were totally the property of her husband.

As social values changed, we went dramatically from one end of the continuum, seeing only the husband representing the family, to the other one. The Industrial Revolution represented a massive social upheaval where many women went out into the workplace and started acquiring salaries and property in their own right. This initiated reforms which ended in a piece of legislation called The Married Women's Property Act, which allowed women to hold property in their own right. It treated them as completely separate from their husbands, and treated them equal to strangers so that property holding between husband and wife, in law, was treated exactly as property holding between two strangers. So, we went from one continuum directly to the other.

What happened as a result of that is that for many years, that was an accepted method of property holding, but gradually we began to realize that this type of separate property holding was extremely detrimental to homemakers--women who worked inside the home--because it valued only financial contribution. If I paid for something, then it's mine. The fact that a woman had worked in the home and had contributed, through that work, to the building up of assets, was not recognized in the eyes of the law. Consequently, in the 1970's the inequity and injustice of that became quite apparent. I think it's interesting that the inequity of that separate property holding came into public consciousness very strongly in the person of one particular woman, and that was Mrs. Murdock.

What happened was, Mrs. Murdock was an Alberta farm wife, who was told that her 15 years of labour on the family farm was no more than that of an ordinary farm wife and, therefore, as a wife, she was not entitled to any interest in the farm property.

The Supreme Court of Canada stated that haying, raking, swathing, moving, driving trucks and tractors, quieting horses, taking cattle back and forth from the Reserve, dehorning, vaccinating, branding, was no more than an Alberta farm wife does everyday. Therefore, as a simple wife, she had not earned any extra interest in the property.

The result of this case was decided at a time when agitation for women's rights was receiving considerable publicity and the case received a great deal of media attention. I think the effect that the case had can be summarized in a quote from the Law Reform Commission of Canada at that time. "The conscience of Canadians was shocked by the application of the present law in the recent Supreme Court of Canada decision of Murdock. When the law requires such results, then nothing can be more apparent than the fact that such law is no longer tolerable in a society that professes its law to be both humane and just." Consequently, from a situation where property was completely separate, legislation across Canada in the late 1970's changed. Every province changed its legislation and we basically have, right now, a system of deferred property-sharing where property is separate between the husband and wife during marriage, but upon marital breakdown, everyone sits down, tallies up all of their assets and basically speaking, the assets are divided more or less equally between the husband and wife. That was a result of that attempt to come and draw the line at a balance between the two ends of the continuum.

What's interesting now, though, is that we've had this law in force in most of the provinces for about more or less a decade, and again we find that with changing social norms, there is a great deal of criticism of that deferred property sharing. With more and more two-income families, what we are hearing is a call for reform from women who say, for example, that this presumption of equal sharing is inappropriate because it presumes that both husband and wife have contributed equally to a relationship marriage that is a partnership and it's not always a partnership. They want their money held separately. On the other hand, we have calls from other groups that say that deferred property sharing is not enough--that property should be held jointly and equally from the moment of marriage; that if marriage is indeed a partnership, then as soon as you get married, all of your property should be held in common. This is something that other civil law jurisdictions have done for many years.

Again, we hear the calls for reform in that if you are really going to share property between individuals in a marriage, then what about children? Why are children not entitled to a share of the property when a marriage breaks up--a share given to them directly, for their own use? Why are they ignored?

We have all of these various criticisms coming upon the reform that took place in an attempt to shift the continuum and we don't know where to go because we don't have a clear idea of what we believe a marriage should be.

Let me go on to my second example now. The second example I was going to talk about was the area of divorce and maintenance. Divorce is a relatively recent concept for Canadians--at least a national divorce act is relatively recent. Our first national divorce act only came into being in 1968. Quite recent in historical terms.

Basically, our divorce law has arisen from very strong ties with religion--the ecclesiastical courts had jurisdiction for many years--and when the state took over that jurisdiction, very strong fault concepts came with it. Consequently, for most of the history in divorce, divorce was considered to be available only to an innocent party who had been wronged. The wronged party, in some cases, was not allowed to remarry. The award of maintenance was seen as something that was reward and punishment. Consequently, if a spouse--if a wife, because it was very gender specific--if a wife had committed adultery, she was not entitled to any maintenance whatsoever. She was guilty and therefore forfeited her right to maintenance. In addition, in many cases, she also forfeited her right to custody. On the other hand, if it was the husband who had committed adultery, he might be forced to pay even more maintenance than normal because he was a guilty party. So this concept of fault and conduct was very strongly entrenched into the concept of divorce.

In the 1970's, this changed gradually. We began to realize that divorce should not be treated like an American Western, where there was a bad guy and a good guy fighting things out with the court to be the referee between them. We felt that, with the introduction of certain, much more complex concepts of the psycho-dynamics of marriage, that fault was buried in the mists of time--that both parties were "at fault" in the breakdown of a marriage and that maintenance--the award of maintenance--should have no relationship to whether someone had been adulterous or had committed cruelty. Instead, maintenance, it was thought, should have a relationship to need. It should not be considered a pension for a wife, as it was sometimes referred to, and a woman should receive maintenance only when she needed it, and only for a short duration of time, to allow her to become self-sufficient. It had a rehabilitative function.

Now, all of this was brought about with great good will, and many of the women's groups supported the changing concept toward a rehabilitative function. What we found, though, was that we had instituted legal reforms without considering other social institutions, the most important of those being the economic realities of the marketplace. So that what we did was change the concept of marriage in the middle and tell, for example, older homemakers who had been married for 25 or 30 years and who had stayed home because that is what they thought marriage was, we now told them, no, marriage is no longer a pension. Your marriage is over. We'll give you some money for a couple of years. Now go out and rehabilitate yourself. What they found was there were very limited job opportunities for older women; that the age gap still existed; and that they were being forced to take jobs as sales clerks in Eatons and that what we had advocated for them as being a reform to legal equality was, instead, an economic disaster.

The other group that we are having increasing concern with is young women with children. When I started practising law several years ago--not that many, but enough to have noticed a distinct change--there was no question that when you had a young woman with young children, that you could argue to the court that she should stay home and raise those children and that if there was money available, the husband should support them to do that. That's no longer the case when you appear in courts these days on behalf of young women with children. Lawyers are not sure of the arguments to make. It is not clear in the law right now whether a young woman with young children should be supported to stay home and take care of those children, or whether there should be an assumption that the children will go into day care and that she will go out and find a job and become "rehabilitated," as the term is. The law is confused on that point because people are confused on that point. I'm not saying that everyone has to choose the same, but if you wish the legal system to be reflective of a coherent family policy, then there must be a decision as to what we want and the law can reflect that.

Right now, we have an economic disaster resulting from marital breakdown for women, and, quite sadly, what we're also seeing is a psychological disaster for children. When we made marriage much easier to get out of, what we thought was that with the introduction of a whole host of counselling facilities--mediation, pre-trial conferences, child custody assessments--that the children would adjust. What we have found recently is that the children don't adjust and they don't adjust over a long period of time. There is a book that recently was published, called Second Chances, which indicated that in a study of children after ten years--ten years after divorce--Judith

Wallerstein reports that no fewer than 40% of the children in the sample were doing poorly in coping with life and that the future of another 15% was uncertain. This is not to say that we should now go back into the concept of "fault divorce." This is to say, though, that legal reform in the absence of coherent family policy is bound for disaster.

In summary, let me say that not only are we in a state of transition right now without clear ideas of where we're going, but that rapid social change is presenting us with issues for the 1990's that we have not yet even begun to address, and as I'm running out of time, let me just very quickly point out two issues that are going to face us--are facing us right now--but the consequences of which are not yet clearly in front of us.

The first one is the impact of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is a charter of individual rights. It clearly supports individual rights and it will, on this continuum, on this theme that I introduced in my presentation, side very clearly, I believe, in terms of individual rights vis-a-vis the family. Now, what that means with respect to children's rights and children's rights versus the state, and children's rights versus parents' rights is only starting to become clear in these few years, and will become much more problematic in the next few years. In addition, what the Charter of Rights and Freedoms does is introduce in Canada the role of judges as very important policy makers. This is a role that judges in the United States have had for years. It is not a role that Canadians are familiar with. In past years, we have seen our judges as primarily interpreters of legislation and interpreters of case law, although we all recognize that interpretation can have its own bias towards it. What we have done with the Charter is given the Supreme Court of Canada the role of making very fundamental and very basic policy decisions in our lives and I have only to mention the Borowski-Morgentaler case with respect to abortion as something that the Supreme Court of Canada is deciding, as opposed to what Canadians are more familiar with. I'm not putting a value judgment on either way. I'm saying that its impact will look quite large in the 1990's.

Very quickly, the last major area is reproductive technology. Given the rapid change in reproductive technology right now, we no longer know clearly what our concept of who a father is and who a mother is. These days, given the advances, a child in 1989 could potentially have five parents--a sperm donor, and ovum donor, the woman who gestates the child and the couple who raise it. Obviously, given those technological changes, traditional notions of paternity, filiation and succession are obsolete. But we have yet to come to grips with the fundamental concepts that need to be changed along with those technological changes.

It has been traditional for our society to look to the law to answer some very important and hard questions. I say that's wrong. I say that all the legal system can do is attempt to implement and enforce the policy that we, as a society, decide upon. I think that we first have to design a coherent family policy and then come to the legal system; otherwise, we are faced with the legal system attempting to implement societal values that are no longer in force, or attempting piece-meal remedies on a patchwork quilt.

Looking first to the legal system to answer questions about mothers, fathers and the relationships between them is like using a sledgehammer to crack a nut--very effective, but not very subtle. Consequently, I leave you with the cop-out, I guess, because I say to you that as a lawyer I cannot help. I cannot be the leader in formulating coherent family policy, but I can be a very definite participant.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF BARBARA NELSON, Q.C.
Law and The Family

Barbara Nelson, Q.C. - lawyer and lecturer, practice preference is family law. Recently a member of the British Columbia Justice Reform Committee and currently a member of the National Executive Committee, Canadian Bar Association.

PRESENTATION:

I, like Frieda, would like to thank the organizers of this conference for inviting me and allowing me to participate. While, after 16 years, I am a confirmed British Columbian, Saskatchewan is home to me. I am Saskatchewan born and raised. I am very happy to be home and to be part of this conference.

Across Canada and indeed in many common law jurisdictions throughout the world, those responsible for the administration of justice have perceived a crisis caused by overcrowding of our court dockets, undue expense to users of the justice system, and delay.
In Canada, the administration of justice is a matter of provincial concern. In November of 1987 in British Columbia, our then Attorney General announced the appointment of the Justice Reform Committee. It was to be chaired by the Honourable Ted Hughs, Q.C., the Deputy Attorney General for British Columbia and a former member for 18 years of the Court of Queens Bench of Saskatchewan. The other members of the committee included four lawyers with different areas of expertise and two lay people. The Honourable Mr. Justice Wallace at the British Columbia Court of Appeal served as Special Advisor to the committee. I was privileged to serve on the committee as a lawyer with family law experience.

Our mandate was ambitious. Generally, to cause the justice system of British Columbia to be accessible, understandable, relevant and efficient to all those it seeks to serve. We were charged, in addition, to look at specific problem areas in the civil law, criminal law, the courts and their structure and jurisdiction, and to investigate the role of alternate dispute resolution within and without the litigation process.

In family law, we were to investigate again, the concept of Unified Family Court. We explored the literature available from other common law jurisdictions and then embarked between February and June of 1988 on a series of public hearings throughout our province. We received submissions orally and in writing from groups and individuals with many and diverse interests, observations and experiences.

Our committee delivered its report in November of 1988, one year after its inception. Many of the 182 recommendations contained in the report have been the subject of legislation to become effective in mid 1990. The extent to which the goals of our mandate will be achieved remains to be seen.

From a personal point of view, I found my experience of serving on the Justice Reform Committee of British Columbia to have been rewarding and disturbing. Winston Churchill, long ago, and Frieda Steele today said "In order to see where you are going, you have to see where you have been." I was aghast at the lack of reliable statistical information available in British Columbia, in Canada and generally in the common law world, yielding little ability to determine the cause of perceived problems and ultimately the effect of proposed changes. Many solutions recommended to us had been previously implemented in other jurisdictions. In most cases, the information of the effective change has come from subject of observations of players usually not litigates in the justice system rather than objective data.

I was distressed as well to learn, primarily from research, that reforms to the justice system have traditionally been project rather than process based. The report of a commission appointed in England, which delivered its report in 1987, noted the high number of previous commissions and report which its commission succeeded.

Our society and the relationship between individuals and individuals in the state and particularly with family and the complexities of family and the complexities of the break up of the family have become too important and too complicated to allow reform to one of its major institutions, the justice system, to respond only to crisis.

The goal of improving access to the justice system, reducing cost and delay, and it is often delay which increases cost, is too important to leave to occasional projects. The major players in the justice system must have a continuing commitment to improvement and to providing the resources to affect and support genuine change.

I was distressed to actually hear from citizens that they perceive the justice system in many respects to be irrelevant and ineffective in resolving their disputes, leading to a level of disrespect for the justice system generally. Something which I believe we cannot, in a changing and ever more complex society, afford. Expense, not only to the poor and disadvantaged, but to everyone but government, major corporations and the most affluent, was seen to be a major impediment to access.

Lord Justice Matthew, an English judge, is attributed by McGary, a legal writer, to have said "Justice is open to all, just like the Ritz Hotel." This attitude was certainly prevelant amongst members of the public that we heard from throughout our travels in our province.

I was concerned to learn as well that in many instances, many of the major players in the justice system including officials of government, members of the judiciary and members of the legal profession while espousing the rhetoric of change, at the same evidence, defensiveness and resistence to change. For example, shortly after our appointment, the government which appointed us and prior to our reporting, introduced large increases in court filing fees, which in many cases tripled that item of expense to litigates.

I was pleased to learn that the legal profession, while taking many of the punches, was not seen to be the only cause of expense and delay. It was apparent to me, however, that the legal profession, in its own interests at the very least, must acknowledge its responsibility to provide access to justice in a reasonable time at a reasonable cost. Lawyers, too often, see our client's cases as belonging to us. We, too often, see the justice system as belonging to us. We fail to advise our clients, at an early stage, of the difficulties and expense facing them in seeking a resolution to the problem. We fail to look at alternatives in addition to or instead of the litigation process. One of my favourite quotes from the Montreal Star thirty years ago on an article about lawyers - when a man gives you an orange, he simply says, have an orange, but when the transaction is entrusted to a lawyer, he adopts this form - I hereby give and convey to you all in singular, my estate and interest, right, title, claim and advantages of and in said orange, together with all its rind, juice, pulp and pits, and all rights and advantages therein with full power to bite, suck and otherwise to eat the same or give away the same with or without rind, skin, juice, pulp and pits anything here and before, here and after, or in any other means of whatsoever nature or kind whatsoever to the contrary in any ways notwithstanding.

BARBARA NELSON, Q.C.

The independence of the bar, a time honoured ideal, will and must be threatened, unless the legal profession acknowledges its responsibility to assist in making our justice system comprehensible, accessible and relevant to its users. In family law, I noted that where access was perceived by the user to be available, the result was often unacceptable or irrelevant. This was particularly true in the area of the amount and enforcement of support awards. Courts, in my opinion, must adopt a consistent philosophy of enforcing court awards and governments must provide the resources for speedy and effective enforcement. We must learn more of the actual cost of raising a child after tax and educate the profession and the public that the support of children is a public priority. Lip service is inefficient. A more general problem in the area of family law, which I have noted from my experience in the JRC, but more specifically from my practice, is the lack of clear philosophy in the drafting of legislation and the application by the courts of legislation and I direct my remarks both to the provincial and the federal governments, where there is divided responsibility for legislating in the family law area.

Other lawyers practicing in what they see to be more rarefied areas of the law like corporate finance or tax, often suggest to me that it must be very difficult to practice in my area because my clients must drive me crazy. This is just absolutely not true. For the most part, the clients are the good part of the work that I do. In thirteen years, I can honestly say there have only been three or four clients which I have not come to know, like and respect. There is a common public misunderstanding that when a separated spouse goes to a family law lawyer, that the expectation is that that spouse wants to punish, financially and with the children, the other spouse. In my experience, this is just simply untrue. Most generally, when an estranged partner in a marriage, be it common law or legal, comes to me, they want to know what is expected of them and what they can expect from their spouse and from the justice system. They come, usually at a time when their lives are in crisis, when their children, their income, their assets are at large and at issue, knowing certainly that it may take up to a year or longer for ultimate resolution. Unless the law has a clear and consistent philosophy, the lawyer is a legal advisor or paralegals, family court counsellors are unable to sufficiently and clearly advise people of what their rights and obligations are at a critical stage. A year later is just too late. Family law, unlike any other area of the law, in my opinion, cries out at an early stage for humane, speedy and inexpensive resolution. This is not possible unless we have a clear understanding of what the law is intended to do in all areas affecting the family, and unless the law is clearly and consistently applied. To suggest that family law be taken out of the arena of the courts, I submit is a mistake. The complexities of family relationships cry out for as many tools and aids to the courts outside the courts as we as a society can afford.

Thank you.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF MARGRIT EICHLER
Law and The Family

Dr. Margrit Eichler - Professor of Sociology of the Family, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and member of the Department of Sociology, University of Toronto. Author of a wide range of books and publications including Families in Canada Today.

PRESENTATION:

SEVEN DILEMMAS CONFRONTING FAMILY LAW

SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AFFECTING FAMILIES

The following social and demographic trends characterize modern families:

1. a high (and increasing) divorce rate;
2. consequently, a high (and increasing) proportion of marriages which involve one or two previously married partners;
3. a high (and increasing) proportion of birth to unmarried women;
4. labour force participation of wives and mothers as the norm, rather than the exception;
5. an increasing proportion of common-law rather than legal marriages;
6. greater visibility of homosexual relationships coupled with demands for public recognition of these relationships as legitimate family forms;
7. an increased public awareness of sexual and physical abuse of children and wives;
8. reduced fertility;
9. increased longevity;

10. high incidence of poverty among women and children; and

11. a great spurt of developments in reproductive techniques.

What are the separate and joint implications of these trends? The most obvious, and all-encompassing effect of the various trends is that we are faced with bewildering array of family forms, all of which represent a substantial minority of families, with none being able to claim to represent the norm.

We have one-earner families and two-earner families, legally married, separated, divorced, remarried, and common-law families, childless and child families, heterosexual and homosexual families, lone-parent and two-parent families, poor, middle income and rich families, abusive families and highly caring, emotionally sustaining families, families in which children are conceived and born in the traditional manner or using artificial various means. All of these types of families are combined in a bewildering multitude of subtypes, making the overall picture yet more confusing.

These trends and their social consequences have resulted in seven dilemmas.

THE SEVEN DILEMMAS

The first dilemma:

Due to the combined effects of high rates of divorce, births to unmarried women, and remarriage, we are witnessing an increased disjunction between marital and parental roles. This is, however, not a sex-neutral phenomenon. We are here talking primarily about a tendency for men not to live together with their biological children and the mother of their children. Mothers tend to keep their children after having given birth, while fathers who are not living with the mothers do not tend to have custody of them. After divorce, similarly, the likelihood of a mother to have custody of her children is much higher than for the father.

On the other hand, since men are quite likely to marry, whether or not they already have children from a previous union, and since their new partner may already have children of her own which she brings into the union, many men are likely to live with children of whom they are not the biological father. Likewise, women may find themselves as part-time (and sometimes full-time) step-parents of their partner's child(ren).

The results in dilemma #1: the meaning of being a father is no longer clear.

The second dilemma:

With the majority of wives in the labour force, husbands no longer fulfil their husbandly roles by just simply "providing:. Correspondingly, it is patently unfair and, indeed, impossible to expect a wife to carry the entire load of family work and household duties if she is, like her husband, a full-time member of the labour force. On the other hand, there are still a minority of families with a "breadwinner" and housewife.

This results in dilemma #2: it is no longer clear what constitutes a "good" wife or a "good" husband.

The third dilemma:

With the increase in common-law marriages, divorces, ex-husbands and ex-wives, remarriages and the increased search for public acceptance on the part of homosexual couples, there is no longer a clear understanding as to the duration of a relationship, or to the nature of a marital or other partnership. Wives retain their own names outside and within marriages, children have names different from those of one or both of their parents, homosexual couples have made some small inroads into being considered a family member for the purposes of social benefits (such as bereavement leave, housing, etc.), and common-law ex-spouses have a claim for support on each other.

This results in dilemma #3: spousal relations have no clear temporal or social boundaries.

The fourth dilemma:

There is an increased awareness of sexual and physical abuse of children. Various professionals are now legally required to report if they suspect that a child is abused. Where abuse occurs, it is most frequently committed by a family member.

Parents in general are thus in the antagonistic roles of being both protector of and aggressor against the child. Non-offending mothers who are married to offending fathers are deprived of a partner if they protect their child and deprived of a child if they protect their partner.

This results in dilemma #4: parents are supposed to protect their children, but children sometimes need to be protected from their parents.

The fifth dilemma:

With the combination of reduced fertility and increased longevity, the dependency structure of the entire country has already shifted dramatically and will continue to shift further, barring unforseen disasters which will wipe out or decimate the elderly population. With this shift, a larger proportion of the population become dependent elderly rather than dependent young. This generates increased financial demands on the health and pension systems, while at the same time financial demands for child care are increasing (in spite of the low fertility) due to the high labour force participation of women.

This results in dilemma #5: how to meet the needs of the elderly as well as those of children and their parents.

The sixth dilemma:

There has been an increase in the number and proportion of lone-parent families, most of which are female-headed. The chances of a female-headed lone-parent family to be poor are very high. In general, women are more likely to be poor than men, and children are more likely to be poor than adults.

This results in dilemma #6: how to solve the problem of female and child poverty.

The seventh dilemma:

The new reproductive techniques have developed so rapidly that it is impossible to keep track of everything that is happening. With the advent of in vitro fertilization (IVF) and attendant techniques, such as embryo transfers, we are faced with multiple types of mothers and fathers and potentially competing claims of semen donors, semen recipients, egg donors, embryo recipients, embryo carriers and social parents.

This results in dilemma #7: how to legally conceptualize semen, eggs, and embryos and the rights and duties of the various types of parents.

LEGAL RESPONSES TO THE SEVEN DILEMMAS

Ad 1: Questions of the definition of paternity tend to become problematic in a legal context with respect to access, custody and child support payments for biological and social fathers. The law reflects the overall uncertainty through lack of a clear definition of the rights and duties of social and biological fathers. Intent becomes thus important in determining the rights and obligations of both types of fathers.

There are two problems that arise from this uncertainty: for one, the lack of a clear definition with a focus on intent may end up penalizing responsible men by saddling them with support obligations while rewarding irresponsible men by letting them off the hook. For the other, an improper connection may be drawn between a "duty" to pay support and the "right" to access. The interests of the child and father may not coincide with respect to access. In cases of conflict around access, an alternative to the "right to access for the father" might be a "right of access for the child", leaving it to the child to initiate - or not to initiate - contact.

Ad 2: Questions of whether one had fulfilled one's wifely or husbandly duties were relevant for as long as conduct was relevant to (a) obtaining a divorce and (b) defining support obligations/rights and property divisions. In response to the current uncertainty with respect to the definition of a good wife or husband, conduct has been severely downgraded as a criterion for divorce (although fault-related reasons still remain) and decreed largely irrelevant for property divisions.

The problem with this solution is that equal division of property may result in inequities where the economic effects of behaviours are seen as irrelevant, and equal contribution to family assets is assumed even where no contributions (or minimally small ones) were made.

Ad 3: The lack of social and temporal boundaries for spousal relations displays itself in law cases in which ex-partners sue for maintenance and sometimes property division after periods of cohabitation of very varying length. At present, legal regulations concerning cohabitation vary across provinces. This has the effect that the same behaviours may have very different consequences depending on what province one happens to live in.

As marriage becomes more of a choice rather than an almost universal state some consideration should be given to maintaining the option of a sexual, emotional and residential partnership without imposed long-term economic obligations.

Ad 4: How to deal with cases of sexually and physically abused children is one of the greatest problems. The problem is less a legal one - the interests of the child clearly come before the interests or rights of parents in this instance - but one of lack of responsiveness on the part of policy makers to provide sufficient adequate alternatives to parental care.

Ad 5: The financial restraint experienced by various social agencies is a terrible and very real one. How does one measure the relative importance of the needs of children vs. those of the elderly? It is impossible, and the dichotomy posed is false. It is inappropriate to play off the needs of one deprived group vs. those of another one. Instead, we need to search for alternatives to meet the needs of both groups. Why are tax write-offs to the rich sacrosanct when pensions and daycare projects are cut?

Ad 6: The problems of female and child poverty have been conceptualized to a large degree as a consequence of divorce and unmarried motherhood and the lack of adequate support payments. This suggests that the solution consists in setting adequate levies of support payments and enforcing their payment. While these are, indeed, extremely important, nevertheless, even the best enforcement will not, in principal, ever solve the problem the child and female poverty. The greatest number of poor women and children live in husband-wife families, and for as long as support payments are deducted from welfare payments, many women and children will not be better off with enforced support payments than without them.

The issue is one of income security for all citizens, young and old. This suggests that we are dealing with a matter of economic and social policy, and that the contributions which family law can make to improving the situation are, while important in their own right, necessarily very limited.

Ad 7: There have been three major responses to various aspects of NRTs: the report of the Ontario Law Reform Commission, the report of the Quebec committee, and the report of the Law Reform Commission of Canada on feticide. The responses vary drastically, and none of them have as yet been translated into law, appropriately so.

While the NRTs raise many utterly new and complex legal issues, they raise equally complex social, medical, ethical and economic issues. It would be quite inappropriate to try to formulate legal responses in the absence of a comprehensive understanding of the social, medical, ethical and economic issues involved.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF ALAN MIRABELLI
Communication With and Within Families

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Allan Mirabelli - Coordinator of Administration, The Vanier Institute of the Family. Published writings and addresses on affects of media on children and family interaction.

PRESENTATION:

CANADIANS SEEM TO NEED TELEVISION

Parents have always worried about the effects that various popular media have and have had on children. They worried about the effect of the Saturday movie matinees, radio drams, comic books, and more recently, television. Much research has been conducted to examine the various effects.

The research data can generally be summarized in one sentence: "for **some** children under **some** circumstances, television has certain effects. For other children under different circumstances, television has different effects." This conclusion can be further summarized into two words "it depends". These conclusions are not very helpful to parents who must decide what is best for their children.

Interestingly enough, most of the research on television focuses on children and rarely examines the way adults use the medium itself and the content it transmits. This paper will briefly offer a perspective which will hopefully help us as parents, husbands and wives, children and friends to understand how we have chosen to use the medium of television in our daily lives (our motivations) and how, if we had not devised this medium over three decades ago, we would now have to invent it. Given the modern lives we must all lead, the choice may have been reduced to one of television or Valium for many of us.

During this presentation, I will look at our daily lives to see what it is about the way we live that makes us need television to the extent that we do. Much of the public discourse surrounding television and children in particular focuses on the perceived negative influences. Rarely do we highlight some of the things the medium does best. Furthermore, research during the last 30 years has sufficiently developed that we can say with some certainty what the influences on children might be. These we will outline briefly. Having developed a perspective on our family lives, and the way we use the medium, as well as having examined some of the influences of television in a pragmatic way, we might look at some suggestions as to how parents and even society might come to terms with a medium that has now been with us for more than a generation, yet one which we still feel unable to control.

Who is Watching Television Today?

There is no doubt that Canadians, in spite of what they may tell you, have developed a strong habit, at least during the winter months, of watching television. However, the family watching television in 1989 is radically different from that of 1956. The difference can be characterized by using two TV programs as models to reflect the changes in our culture. In 1956, families were idealized by the program "Father Knows Best", which reflected the expressed ideal of a society for a nuclear family made up of father (who earned the bacon), mother (who cooked it) and children. Current programs reflect the variety of family forms which are to be found in our culture today. The Cosby (as a professional, dual income family with children), Kate and Allie (two divorced single mothers, sharing not just a house but making a home together with their children), Our House (a widow living with her children in her father-in-law's house), My Two Dads (both of whom inherit joint custody of a teenage girl when her mother dies and paternity is unclear) (definitely not a show of the 1950's) and, of course, Family Ties. Even with this show, the conventions have changed significantly.

The simple illustration of today's sitcoms points out the extent to which families now differ. If we look at families today, we will see that they differ by structure and by membership. Who are the families watching television today?

They are:

- the husband and wife
- common-law husband, common-law wife
- biological children
- stepchildren
- grandparents
- adolescent mother with her father and mother
- lone parent and children
- multi-generational family
- member with special needs

Families also differ by heritage, by locality, by stage of family life cycle, and by functional patterns (one-earner, two-earner, multiple earners, rigid division of domestic labour and/or child care, etc.)

What is truly notable in the 1980's is the proportion of young women with children who have entered the labour force or who have remained in the labour force after the birth of their children. Their numbers have doubled in the past 30 years. (65% of married women between 25 and 34 are now in the labour force.) In order to provide a reasonable income to sustain a family and a certain number of dependents, a large majority of Canadian families must now depend on two wage earners with all that that implies.

Given this significant change in family life in recent years, **what does family feel like today?** For many, family life and the relationships within it feel as if each is living on the leftovers of human time and commitment. We may be sharing our tiredness more than our liveliness, with a pervasive sense of exhaustion, tension and guilt.

Picture, if you will, the typical routine of the average young family:

> Up early in the morning in time to get the kids dressed, lunches made and kids delivered to day-care or school before mother and father must arrive at their place of employment. Then, there proceeds a regular day of "busyness", meetings, phone calls, clients, assembly lines and memos before rushing to pick up the kids by a pre-arranged time so that their caregivers to not charge us with breach of contract (in Ottawa, $1/minute). Then, home to prepare a meal while TV babysits the kids. Once a week, we're off to the community college to take a course on introduction to microprocessing for the sake of career advancement, at least one other evening is devoted to some school or day-care advisory committee and, if we can fit it in, we try to make it to an exercise class now and then trying to keep our bodies fit enough to pursue this pace. Baths and homework are supervised prior to our schedule amount of time for spousal interpersonal relating before we watch the National News which, thank God, now comes on at 10:00 p.m. because the CBC shrewdly

> realized that few of us can keep our eyes open past 10:30. Weekends have assumed their own schedule, often even tighter than the weekdays as we set off to Canadian Tire to purchase the insulating materials that will occupy us on Sunday before, if we can manage it, friends arrive for dinner. Those of us who are in the sandwich generation trying to assume either financial or social and emotional responsibility for our aging parents as well as our kids try to squeeze in a visit with Grandma or Grandpa on the weekend too.

Briefly, this reflects the chaotic condition of most of our daily lives. We seek refuge in the misnamed "family room" each evening between the hours of 7:30 and 11:00 when we turn on the television set, not to watch a particular program but simply to watch television, choosing the least objectionable program per given half-hour knowing that another program will replace it. The next thing we know Barbara Frum is saying goodnight.

According to the Bureau of Broadcast Measurement (BBM - Fall survey), Canadians during 1988 watched on average 24 hours per week of television. If one consults American statistics, one finds that on an average, American children watch 27.8 hours of TV per week if they are aged between two and five years, 24 hours for children between six and 11 years, and 23 hours for teenagers. As people leave the teen years, the number of hours climbs to 28 for adults.

If one calculates the number of hours that we sleep each week (56 hours), the number of hours we work at jobs or in the community (40 hours), and we watch TV 28 hours per week, we can see that there is very little time left for the kinds of relational engagements we all say that we value. Here we speak of time - we do not even begin to talk of motivation and the energy required. We seem ready, once we have come home from work and dispensed with the essential tasks of eating and putting the children to bed, to trade in our daily diary which compartmentalized our workplace activities for the **TV TIMES** which does the same.

The creative energy required to motivate oneself to seek alternative activities to occupy the unscheduled time (however limited) which is available to us is hard to come by. If it is a choice between TV and Valium, Canadians seem to be choosing TV in large measure.

The medium of TV operates in real time - if you miss any part of the program as it is being broadcast, you cannot recapture it later on (VCR's notwithstanding). It's gone!! The real time nature of the medium has allowed us to escape each other as we sit within the same room fostering the illusion that we are engaged in a family activity. If your child or spouse approaches you as you are reading the newspaper and says "Something important happened today" - you can put down the newspaper, attend to their needs and later resume your reading. How many of us have sat in the family room while the TV set is on and have said when approached with something important, "SSSHHH, wait a minute, I am watching this" and 30 minutes later, "SSHH", something else is important. In each instance, we may be denying the affirmation which is required by the other person.

In "Television Watching and Family Tensions" in the February 1976 issue of **The Journal of Marriage and the Family,** the authors hypothesized that the TV could be associated with family problems when it is used as a coping mechanism or, more importantly, as a means of avoiding dealing with family problems. The real time nature of the medium excuses recognition of other family members' needs. People have always been able to escape tensions within the home simply by learning. However, if the absence was recurrent it signalled to the spouse remaining behind that there may be an issue within the relationship. Our use of the medium of TV in real time may be allowing us to avoid tense interactions and therefore not recognizing that there is an issue simply because we are together in the "family room" sharing a TV program.

Similarly, when children are in the way as we prepare dinner, they turn to TV since the medium does not require the mediation of an adult, as does a story, and consequently they adopt patterns similar to those of their parents. The energy required to deal with a child invited to help in the kitchen during meal preparation may be more than we have to offer.

Balance/Counterbalance

Whether we are talking about adults or children, what does three hours per day of TV watching do for us? One of the things that TV does best is to familiarize us with issues, things, persons, and elements of the human condition which we will never have an opportunity to experience directly. How many of us, for example, despite nightly newscasts describing the conditions in Lebanon, can explain who is fighting whom and why? We are familiar with the situation but it takes more than a nightly newscast to really understand.

Television familiarized us extremely well with situations that we might not otherwise encounter. But, using the example of the war in Lebanon, to develop an understanding requires that we might need to visit the country to witness the rage and its expression or to have neighbours who have fled the war=torn nation describe for us the circumstances which led to their escape and their anguished concern for relatives left behind. We might also need to read historical accounts of the Lebanese conflict to enrich our perspective. All of this is to suggest that a diversity of experience, sources, and approaches is required in order for us to begin to synthesize some level of real understanding. However, we rarely move beyond the level of familiarity, be it the war in Lebanon or any other program. TV is entertainment and for most of us, we have neither the time nor the energy to move beyond what the medium can provide. To what extent can we move beyond familiarity and enter the world of understanding if the way we choose to use our disposable time is primarily dedicated to one type of activity based on a particular medium's expression of any given idea.

One of TV's most popular programs is not produced in Hollywood or in Toronto but rather in local communities. It is the local newscast at suppertime. Canadians value privacy and their homes are the ultimate refuge. As a consequence, they turn on the local news to discover that is happening within their own community thus fostering the illusion that they are participants in the community's activities. Yet they are simply observers from a distance. Children or adults, through their participation in living experiences within the community, observing the behaviour of others, i.e. senior citizens, young couples with infants, children older than themselves, children younger than themselves, people arguing in public spaces, begin to pick up cues for appropriate behaviour long before they require them so that when confronted with an unfamiliar situation they might search their lived experience "memory bank" for appropriate alternatives for behaviour. I would suggest that the growth of the "how to" book industry in recent years is testimony to the fact that few of us carry sufficient or adequate cues for appropriate behaviour gained from the experience of living in community. Therefore, by default TV provides us with cues for behaviour (familiarity) in the absence of real experiences. A culture such as ours which is structured primarily on the basis of age and gender limits the possibilities for inter-generational contact, for contact among peoples of diverse backgrounds and experience.

For many community cannot be found within the community centre and the recreation centre where most programs are devised along age, gender and interest lines.

Given our harried lifestyles and the role that the television occupies in our attempt to cope, how can we diversify the basis of our experience. By default, we are being socialized by television. The question is, how do we provide ourselves with the diversity of lived experience that brings real understanding to the familiarity that television provides.

What do we know about TV and our children?

We now turn finally to children, who like their adult counterparts admit TV into their lives at an early age and with great ease. Of major concern to parents is the effect of this early exposure to the medium of television and the cumulative effect it will have on their lives. Parents seem to be balancing on a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they do not wish to "hold back" their pre-schoolers by denying them the benefits of Sesame Street or Polka Dot Door. While on the other hand, they feel that such exposure leads to the development of an interest in "Saturday morning cartoons" and other children's programs which they do not value as contributing positively to their children's development.

However, parents rationalize their children's viewing, they will watch. The medium is well-entrenched within their culture and will remain a part of their reality.

A recently published review of the research literature studying **The Impact on Children's Education: Television's Influence on Cognitive Development** has reversed many of the common assertions made by parents about the medium. Anderson and Collins in their study state:

> ...that there is no evidence that television has a mesmerizing effect on a child's attention; ...children's attention is variable;
>
> ...programs produced specifically for children are readily understood; ...their attention is fragmented only when they try to follow complex adult level presentations;
>
> ...children will vary their activity between television and playing concurrently; ...conversations indicate that children do speculate and reflect about program resolutions;
>
> "...there is little evidence that television viewing displaces valuable cognitive activities"; ...TV viewing displaces other forms of entertainment (i.e. radio, reading, listening to music and participation in organized sports); "...homework does not seem to be affected";
>
> "...there is no clear evidence that television influences imaginativeness"; ...however, one study suggests the inability to think of alternative uses for an object;

> "...TV viewing may affect task perseverance and impulsivity";
>
> "...viewing violent action programs may cause reduced perseverance and viewing educational programs may cause increased perseverance."

This literature review strongly refutes the popularly-held beliefs that television is mesmerizing, that it inhibits cognitive development and that children cannot engage in alternative activities. However, when examining the conclusions around imagination and activities forsaken for television view, it seems to suggest that if we are to engage in any kind of parental influence it should be in the area of introducing children to alternative activities.

What can parents do?

While our expressed concern is always about children, in light of issues raised in the first part of this paper, we can easily direct some of the suggestions to adults as well. Most often we express our displeasure with the medium because of what we perceive to be wrong with commercials and certain programs. Our usual response is to demand that governments, through their regulatory agencies, control what is made available over the airwaves. Similarly, parents anguish over how to control their children's use of the medium.

Interestingly enough, governments and parents are facing the same dilemma - how to control that which can no longer be controlled? Most Canadian communities, if cabled, received some 25 to 30 channels, of which at most five or six are Canadian and therefore, subject to the regulatory controls of our government. Historically, it was easy to control the few networks which existed when the distribution system was limited to airwaves.

Similarly, parents, in the early days of TV, when the schedule was limited to a few hours in the broadcast day and the number of channels was restricted, could more easily control what their children watched. Today, with most household having two TV sets, if not more, connected to cable systems offering some 30 channels, control in the old sense is no longer realistic, and children do not limit their viewing to their own home but watch at friends' homes, or when their parents are not home.

If control is not within our parental reach and our governments cannot control the majority of the signals which enter our livingrooms, then what is to be our approach?

Many have suggested that the answer lies in turning off our television sets. This option is neither realistic nor viable given the conditions and lifestyles which exist within most household.

One of the suggestions often heard is that parents watch with children certain programs in order that they might help young ones interpret and understand the content which is being presented. The parent is meant to be the mediator. The previous section has demonstrated that children have developed a keen selective ability to choose programs which are appropriate to their capacity for comprehension. Consequently, it may not be as necessary for parents to mediate and interpret programs for their children. The limited time that parents have available may be better spent trying to introduce and re-introduce their children to a diverse group of alternative activities which might experientially help the child develop sense of identify, self-worth and skill development. Initially this will be demanding for the parents since they must motivate themselves and their children to deal creatively with unscheduled time. Through doing whatever is fun alone and with others, a child may learn how to be responsible. All that "responsible" means in this case is "to be able to respond".)

Once the child is old enough, we can invoke the same techniques that parents have used when they introduce the weekly allowance. Parents, wishing their children to learn to budget, give them an allowance to support whatever independent purchases children wish to make. "Once you have spent the money, don't ask for more. You must then wait for next week's allowance." Teaching time-budgeting is equally appropriate.

A child could be given on a Saturday a copy of the **TV Times** and parent and child can then negotiate how many hours a week of TV would be appropriate for that child. Let us assume that we arrive at the figure of seven hours per week. (We know that the child watches TV elsewhere e.g. friends' homes, at the babysitters, etc.) All that we are hoping to accomplish is to reduce the time he or she watches television such that we can introduce them alternative activities.

During the first week, by Sunday evening, they will have exhausted their allotted time and by Monday expressions of "I am bored" and "There is nothing to do" will be heard. It is at this point that parents will be required to have the energy and motivation to guide their children to develop new interests and participate in activities outside the home.

Over time they will hopefully become engaged in other activities and the refrain of boredom won't be heard. Also, it is hoped that they will choose to watch less TV as they become more interested and confident in their engagement in alternative activities. All you can do is create a climate in which alternative activities with diverse groups of friends can be perceived in a preferential way.

Similarly, when Canadian television airwaves are swamped by foreign content Canadian government regulatory agencies cannot control that which enters our living room. There are very few avenues left to us as a Canadian culture if we are to provide a distinctly Canadian perspective. Governments may only now be able to cultivate the development and creation of content which is of such excellent quality that it will more often than not displace or complement that which we currently choose to watch. This approach requires a great deal of human resources, commitment, money, and vision for it to be successful. I am not sure that as a nation we are prepared to seek those kinds of cultural alternatives.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF DR. RICHARD F. LEWIS
Communication With and Within Families

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PRESENTATION:

Media and the Family: Mutual relationships

From birth, a child is exposed to at least two major sets of stimuli: the family and the media which interact to entertain, inform, support, encourage and persuade. There are certainly other sources of information such as churches, schools, and peers but the family and the media would appear to be two of the most powerful. Media exert influence in two ways: as direct sources of information and entertainment and as factors influencing communication patterns within families. This paper deals with both these influences and suggests what families can do to cope with media. The essential message is that the media not only provide role models but that the media-person interaction can also pose difficulty for today's family. Only by planning, experiencing and discussing media interaction can families harness the power of media to achieve maximum personal and group potential.

The Media

Today we are living with mega-media. With the introduction of satellite dishes, cable television, and video tapes, television rushed into a multi-channel barrage of programming which saturates every hour of every day. Electronic advances have also expanded the varieties of media options; computer games, video games, electronic board games and arcade games are now available. Films in theatres, videotape, and radio are also competing for attention.

This multiplicity of media has a two-edged impact on communication. It can legitimatize patterns of communication and it can severely limit the time available for interpersonal communication.

How Families Have Been Portrayed

Families appear most often in television programs and not in other media like radio, computer or video games and bubble-gum cards. Television families like real-life families spend much of their time in some form of communication, but media communication and real-life family communication may contrast sharply. To understand the evolution of communication patterns as shown on prime-time television, it is important to review some particular shows.

In the hit of the fifties, **Father Knows Best**, viewers saw a typical American family calmly discussing and resolving its difficulties. The title, however, said it all because Robert Young eventually solved all the problems.

In **Bonanza**, now revived by YTV, the boys and Pa showed the viewer how real men in the West communicated. Little Joe, often in trouble could always depend on his brothers and his father to pull him through. Pa was the all-wise, all knowing paternal leader. Hoss, big and slightly stupid, provided a contrast to Adam, the eldest and smartest son. Within these stereotyped roles, the family in Bonanza worked out its individual and family goals.

As we flash forward to **All in the Family**, another model of family communication emerged. Archie Bunker treated Edith like an indentured servant, assuming ignorance and error-ridden behaviour. Although Edith was the butt of superior-inferior communication, Archie appeared to love her. **All in the Family** also included an example of multicultural communication: Michael Stivic and his famous nickname, "Meathead". In the program, Archie amply illustrated the in-law problem: a grudging tolerance but far from mutual respect. Archie and Michael spoke to each other in derisive and harsh terms, always looking to provoke and challenge. The women, Gloria and Edith usually helped clear up the inevitable misunderstanding.

In 1989, there appear to be two extremes in television family communication portrayals. **The Cosby Show** and **Family Ties** are on one end of the scale and **Roseanne** and **Full House** are on the other. In **The Cosby Show** and **Family Ties**, the families communicate in an ideal manner respecting each other for the most part. The difference from **Father Knows Best** is that in modern shows, the father is sometimes wrong. At the other extreme, **Roseanne** and **Full House** exemplify the harsh communication so common in **All in the Family**.

Conflict Resolution in the Media

One major impact of the media is in establishing communication patterns which reflect conflict resolution. Conflict, whether simply a difference of opinion or a serious disagreement exists in all aspects of life and is portrayed in a variety of forms on television. The Rambo model permeates much of what we see in the electronic media. Rambo, a re-incarnation of the legendary superheroes, uses power and might to win. Other televised heroes such as the **Rifleman**, **MacGyver**, and Alexis of **Dynasty** use guns, brains or money as their weapon of choice. the model in these cases is to use power to defeat the threat. Chuck Connors used his rifle, Rambo used his bazookas, MacGyver uses his intelligence and Alexis, her money. In mediated conflict resolution, force is the persuader, very rarely is conflict resolved through face-to-face negotiation. The stronger force wins. However, as we see in the latest versions of **Star Wars** and **Star Trek**, the dark forces keep re-appearing only to be fought off again by the good side.

In video games or computer games, force continues to be the prime solution to problems. Some currently popular bubble-gum cards also show the destruction of the weak by the powerful. In one particular graphic, a school bus complete with children is shown being eaten by a creature which looks like a Tyrannosaurs Rex.

Other media such as board of fantasy games use a mixture weaponry and strategy to outwit the opponent. Popular music, such as **Man in the Mirror** by Michael Jackson may outline a dilemma, but the solutions are internalized rather than imposed on other people. This trend is reflective of the music of the sixties when the Beatles suggested that all you need is love.

Family Communication While Interacting with Media

Many non-media activities require family members to communicate while doing them. A badminton game, or baseball is difficult to play silently. Household tasks are easier when done by more than one. But what of family communication when media are present? While watching television, some families never seem to speak (except during commercials). One who tries to interrupt a television program might be asked to refrain until the program is over. Radio can be even more solitary. The popularity of portable stereo radio/cassette players allows listeners complete privacy from the rest of the world. Communication with a family member wearing a set of headphones is often fruitless. Books and comics do not lend themselves well to shared reading because of different reading speeds. Bubble-gum cards are seldom viewed by parents with their children. As hockey cards were collected in

Montreal in the sixties, monster cards are popular today. As our parents did not scan our cards, parents today are unlikely to do so.

Computer games present challenges to one or two children at a time. In two-player games, opportunities for communication are available but the common etiquette requires silence or communication with the machine rather than the person. In addition, many computer games are solitary activities encouraging the child to play independently.

Fantasy games provide an interesting variant. Games like **Dungeons and Dragons** and **Robotech** are role-playing games which allow the Game Master to set up the adventure which others play. Fantasy characters have magic or special implements which help them in their quests. Communication is required so that the game can proceed.

It becomes obvious from this brief overview, that certain media provide increased opportunity for communication within families while other media severely limit communication. The challenge becomes to find out where, when, and how to communicate during a media-person interaction.

Family Communication in the Electronic Age

Families will have to work harder at communicating with each other. The challenge is posed not only by the sheer volume of media available but also by the often greater appeal offered by the media. Here are some suggestions for family communication in the media environment:

Plan media interactions so that family members can participate in them. Family members should have a set of shared experiences with media so that they have a basis for communication. Events like natural disasters or the weather are easy to discuss because of the group experience element involved. Media can provided the same type of group experience. Unfortunately, unless the interaction is planned, each member of the audience will interact with the program or game alone. Parents will have to learn what children watch on TV, what they hear on the radio, what's on their bubble-gum cards, what computer games they play and what they read. Parents will then have to try to experience these media with the child.

Discussion of the family communication patterns can help a family examine their own perceptions of the communication process within the family. Does family communication mimic television's patterns? An analysis of a family's communication pattern can be compared to the models presented on the family's favourite television shows. **The Cosby Show** and **Family Ties** present very different communication models than **Full House** or **All in the Family**.

Changes in programming can also help. **Degrassi Junior High**, the award-winning Canadian television series for teens shows models of communication absent in many other programs. The models of family communication may not be ideal but provide an excellent basis for discussion, plus very current topics for conversation.

CBC **Sesame Street** has attempted to show families in communication. Over the years, **Sesame Street** has experienced birth, death, and marriage -- all events requiring honest communication. As very young children watch television they my learn patterns of sharing, interacting, compromising and responding. To integrate these patterns into the family structure, parents must watch with the child and discuss the communication patterns shown.

Conflict resolution within the family can be based on television themes and programs. Within the family context, members are4Xunlikelyto use spells, weapons, or slave-monsters to resolve conflicts. Instead the family will have to rely on persuasion, reinforcement and punishment strategies. **Degrassi Junior High** provided models of conflict resolution. In one episode, Joey is challenged to fight the school bully and despite his efforts to avoid the fight, must eventually perform. The program shows attempts to talk out the problem. Although a fight occurs, it is not the solution. The powerful bully may win the fight but is seen as the goat by the episode's end. In **Sesame Street** segments, children are shown creative ways of conflict resolution by modelling positive conflict resolution strategies. The child is shown as being empowered to solve conflicts by creative means. When an argument over a ball takes place, the children are first shown fighting and retreating to their respective homes. While at home, the children dream of good times with the now adversarial playmate. By the end of the segment, they have recognized the tiff as a temporary break in their friendship and are back playing together.

Conclusion

The mass media contain powerful messages designed by professionals for specific purposes. Although the objective can be seen as entertainment, there are many messages which accompany this entertainment. Often the underlying messages are more powerful than the main objective. In addition to selling soap, the advertiser is also unwittingly selling a life-style based on the assumption which the audience may not even notice. This paper has presented some of the messages communicated in the media about family communication. By planning media interaction carefully, interacting with media within the family and then discussing the issues presented, families can find effective ways of dealing with media.

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF W. L. (SCOT) GARDINER
Communication With and Within Families

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Dr. W. Lambert Gardiner - Associate Professor, Department of Communications Studies, Concordia Univerity; author of The Ubiquitous Chip: The Human Impact of Electronic Technology.

PRESENTATION:

YOUR FUTURE HOME: ELECTRONIC COTTAGE OR ENCLAVE?

How, you may well ask, can a bachelor stand up here and profess to be an expert on the family? Here are my credentials. I was born at a very early age. So were we all, you protest. This is the point. This is a universal experience. Our long period of infant dependency requires that we be born into a family. (There are other ways to raise children. However, to paraphrase Winston Churchill's comment on democracy: Family is the worst form of child-rearing in the world - except for all the other forms.) Intimate relationships are established during this period in which we need care to survive and this ensures that we will in turn care for our children.

It is this secure base of intimacy which gives us the confidence to go out and explore the planet. Imagine the child hanging on to mother's skirts. The child ventures out to explore, gets frightened, and rushes back to base. As we get older and older, we can go out further and further, and stay out longer and longer. Neil Armstrong got all the way to the moon without his mother. Throughout our lives, we are attempting to maintain a balance between the contentment of familiar things and the excitement of unfamiliar things.

The alternative to an intimate relationship is a contractual relationship. Let me make this distinction clear. You stop at a grocery store on the way home from work to get some food to cook for your spouse. Your relationship with the grocer is contractual. That is, the members of the relationship are interchangeable. It really does not matter to him /her that this particular customer buys the food and to you that this particular grocer sells it. You now take this food home and cook it for you and your spouse. Your relationship with your spouse is intimate. That is, the members of the relationship are not interchangeable. It does matter that it is you who is cooking it and that the particular person you have chosen to live with is eating it.

Obviously, all our relationships are some blend of intimate and contractual. However, some people tend to see relationships as basically contractual. Your relationship with your mate is essentially the same as your relationship to your grocer - you have a longer shopping list which contains psychic as well as physical goods. Some people tend to see relationships as basically intimate. A stranger is just a friend you have not met yet. You have an understanding with your grocer that you will not realize the full potential intimacy of two members of the same species of the same planet in basically the same predicament. There is a tacit agreement: you play grocer and I'll play customer. However, there is always a penumbra of intimacy around even the most contractual relationships.

Those who think relationships are basically contractual tend to see the world as composed of smart guys and suckers; those who think relationships are basically intimate tend to see the world as composed of saints and sinners. Needless to say, I tend to avoid the former, because in their world, I am a sucker; and tend to gravitate to the latter because, in their world, I am a saint.

Intimate relationships is the domain of the family; whereas contractual relationships is the domain of the other institutions in society. The modern home subcontracts out so many functions to other institutions (work to office and factory, play to theatre and arena, learning to school and university) that it often degenerates into a sort of service station, where the family members fill up during the day and park at night. Many of our major social problems stem from the failure of the family to maintain a central role in society or, in my terms, to establish intimate relationships.

What about the future? Will the intimate relationships of the family be generalized to society at large? A stranger is just a friend you have not met yet and the planet is a global village in which you are at home. Reach out and touch someone. Or will the contractual relationships of society inundate the home? A spouse is just like your grocer, and the planet is a hostile environment whose only refuge is a fortress home. Reach out and punch someone.

The two major visions of the home of the future can be linked to the two major scenarios of the emerging information society - the telematique scenario, based on television, and the privatique scenario, based on telephone. In the former, a few sources beam information down the great electronic highway to millions of receivers; in the latter, we are all sources and receivers within a complex network of nodes. Those two options are nicely symbolized in in the two wires which link the home to the rest of society - the television cable and the telephone line.

The television-based telematique scenario sees the home of the future as an enclave within which the fortress family huddles to protect itself from a hostile environment. Since most of the important functions are fulfilled by the home, there is little motivation to leave it. The home becomes a sort of womb for two (or a few) with a view. The view is supplied by the television screen and most services are delivered through the umbilical cord of the television cable.

The telephone-based privatique scenario sees the home of the future as an electronic cottage, linked to neighbours around the world which has been technology-shrunk to a global village. It revives the notion of the family as the productive unit in society, as it is in preindustrial society, rather than simply the consumption unit that it has become in industrial society. The telephone wire permits the home to be a node in a network, in which we are all sources as well as destinations.

Innovations in computer and telecommunications technologies, and their convergence into a informatics infrastructure, is moving us from an industrial society, based on energy, into a post-industrial society, based on information. The manner in which this infrastructure develops will determine which of those visions prevail It looks to me at the moment - but then I am an optimist - that the telephone-based rather than the television-based system is winning.

There is evidence that the television-based system is on the decline. The television-based scenario, in its extreme, would make us all couch potatoes. The revolt of the couch potato is in progress. The first step is the remote control, which permits us to browse from channel to channel. The second step is the videocassette recorder which permits us to escape the available channels. The third step will come soon - interactive videodiscs will become commercially available. Those will permit us to explore 54,000 images in any order we wish. That is, we can choose not only what we want to watch but the order in which we watch it. The final step will take a few more years. Desktop video production systems, now available for about $75,000, will become commercially available so that we can make our own show. This shift from consumer to producer is symptomatic of the move to a privatique scenario.

On the other hand, new telephone=-based information technologies promise to bring the functions, now subcontracted out to other institutions, back to the home. Most of us will be processing information which can as easily be done at home, since we can pull information in by attaching a modem to our telephone. Informatics can also permit us to play at home and to learn at home.

Richard Bolles wrote about **The Three Boxes of Life: And How to Get Out of Them.** The three boxes are the Education box of childhood, when we spend most of our time learning; the Work box of adulthood, when we spend most of our time working; and the Retirement box of old age, when we spend most of our time playing. He advocates a more balanced life in which learning, working, playing are more evenly distributed throughout our lives.

The new informatics technology, by permitting us to learn, work, and play in the same place, may help us get out of those three boxes of life. Indeed, I find it increasingly difficult to separate those three activities. For example, am I learning just now or am I working or am I playing? I certainly learned a lot in preparing it and am learning now in presenting it, it is also work - I guess since I am being paid for it, but it sure feels like play to me. To describe that I am doing now - and what I am increasingly doing in my life - I have invented the term **woplle** from the initial letters of **working-playing-learning.**

During this turbulent transitional phase, it is important that we be aware of the threats from the telematique scenario and the opportunities of the privatique scenario. The best way to predict the future is to invent it. Let us invent a future in which the family is central to society and its intimate relationships permeate our planet.

PANEL PRESENTATION
BY TERRENCE M. HUNSLEY
Family Income

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Terrence Hunsley - Executive Director,
Canadian Council on Social Development.
Numerous addresses and publications on
Canadian social policy issues.

PRESENTATION:

I want to talk about family support policy, with a time frame of the past fifteen or twenty years.

Perhaps because I spent much of my childhood on Nova Scotia's Bay of Fundy Shore, expressions and metaphors referring to the sea, tend to stick in my mind. I recall at one point late int he social security review of the mid-seventies, a comment by the Chairman of one of the national working parties, on which I was the New Brunswick delegate.

The review was beginning to lose steam, having been undermined by inflation and the slow down of the economy, and he made the comment; "I think the tide of social consciousness is going out."

Perhaps his words were prophetic. But I didn't realize we would have such a long time to look at the mud flats of social policy, or that so many precious lives would be trapped in the tiny pools and streams that remained.

Until that point though, the social security review had been a very optimistic exercise. It followed on the introduction of a series of resource and development programs which were very forward-looking. The Canada Assistance Plan, occupational training for adults, a national system of community colleges, the job creation branch of Employment and Immigration, special housing programs for natives, rural areas, inner cities, tax co-operatives, and many others. In New Brunswick, a substantial program had just been introduced which supported the development of self-help groups and community economic development, cost-shared under the Canada Assistance Plan.

We hoped that the review would lead to income supplementation for the working poor, to publicly-supported jobs for the employment - disadvantaged, and to a variety of accessible and responsive social services which were not tied to welfare dependency.

Well, perhaps we were working under the Rosy Glow of false illusion. But we had a growing economy, a growing labour force, and we were trying to achieve greater tolerance and equality in the context of that growth. And there was progress; in income standards, educational standards, housing standards, health standards.

But times have changed since then, and if we had illusions about he commitment of our society to overcome poverty, we have by now been thoroughly disemburdened of those illusions. With the exception of some needed improvements in the status of the elderly, we have seen much of the earlier progress reverse itself.

"Stagflation", tax breaks for corporations and high income individuals, and economic policy which thrust us into recession, combined to put a continuing strain on government budgets. Unfortunately, this took place at a time when, due to demographic, economic and social change, the overall demand for income support, family support services, labour market services, and community care, ...what we might call Social Demand... was doubling. In order to control their liability, governments have attempted to shift social costs back onto those who incur them.

So ...in this leaner and meaner society, how have families adjusted?

- They have reduced their average size from almost four, to just over three.
- The typical family now has two earners, rather than one.
- Many become affluent, especially as people began finding their partners more often within their own occupational circles...doctors married doctors, lawyers married lawyers, social workers helped social workers?...We have a new wealthy class being formed, of couples who will enter middle age with their children grown, their mortgage paid, with two professional salaries, substantial pension benefits, and very likely an inheritance of substantial property from their parents.

Our governments have been good to these families. Recent policies have provided them with capital gains Exemptions, increased RRSP limits to subsidize their savings, decreased marginal tax rates on their income, a consumption tax policy which will exempt their savings. Because they save more than they borrow, they benefit from high interest rates. They also are being subsidized by their children, because of the current policy to shift the costs of the Canada Pension Plan onto the next generation. (These latter costs, by the way, are as large as the entire national debt, but for some reason we don't hear much concern about that from business representatives or politicians).

- Our governments have expressed their concern about other families. Single parent families, young families, working poor families, in other ways.

Our governments want these families to work, and to ensure that there are opportunities, our governments have reduced the value of the minimum wage...that wage defined as the level of remuneration under which a worker is not employed, but exploited...by other thirty percent since 1975. (The average real wage lost about four percent during the same period).

Despite this, our governments have placed priority on maintaining an incentive to work, and have striven mightily to keep social assistance payments, wherever possible, below that sinking minimum wage. They have done this by ignoring the real cost of living, and maintaining blatantly inadequate rates, even where their legal right to claim cost-sharing for such programs, is highly questionable.

The results? ...(from our most recent fact book on poverty)

- The poverty gap..that amount necessary if everyone were to have their income supplemented to the statistics canada poverty line..increased by twenty percent, from 6.5 to 8.2 billion 1986 dollars, between 1973 and 1986.

More importantly, though, kicking the floor out of the bottom end of the wage scale contributed to growth in the poverty gap measured before government transfers are considered, of over 80% from 134 to 26 billion 1986 in the same period.

- It is now impossible for a person working at the minimum wage to live at the poverty line as an individual, let alone think about supporting a family.

In 1975, a person with a dependent spouse and child, who worked full-time at a minimum wage, earned 81% of the poverty line for that family size. By 1986, with both partners working full-time at a minimum wage, they would still earn only 92% of the poverty line, but with increased costs of transportation, child care, and fast foods, and a whole new burden of family stress. Do you think they might feel that government policies have forced them onto the wrong escalator of life?

Low-income working families are being forced to have two earners, just to maintain their present level of poverty. Of all working poor couples with children in 1986, fully 37% had two or more earners.

Moreover, many families just above the poverty lines, are there only as long as thy have a second earner. A study by Robert Swindinsky (Canadian Public Policy, ix:1:71-80, 1983) indicates that in 1977, family poverty rates would have been 38% higher, if it were not for a second earner in the family. That figure would undoubtedly be much higher now.

- Between 1973 and 1986, the number of poor households in Canada increased by 366,000, despite a decrease in poverty rates among the elderly. Of the increase, about 150,000 were families..mainly young..mainly led by female single parents. These families have surely been singled out to be at the bottom of our socio-economic ladder. Their social assistance rates ignore any concept of adequacy. Their poverty rate is 56%. In 1973 they were raising 29% of all poor children. Now they have 36%. In Sweden, 9.8% of the children of female lone parents live in poverty. In Canada, the figure is 61.8%.

For all of these families, our governments have reduced the level of childrens' benefits, increased consumption taxes, and reneged on the promise of a decent child care system. They have supported, instead, the development of foodbanks, soup kitchens, and temporary shelters for the homeless. Crisis services have become a growth industry.

But of course we must be realistic as well as idealistic, if we want to improve the situation for low income families. So how could we improve the situation in a way which could be economically feasible?

1. We could increase minimum wages to a level equal to the poverty line for an individual. That would push the bottom end of the wage scale upward, which is necessary. It would have an inflationary impact, but a mild one relative to the benefit. It would be less, and more justifiable than that caused by a national sales tax.

Now some will say that increasing low end labour costs will result in a decrease in the number of jobs. That my be true to some extent, although these are often service sector jobs, which are not necessarily competing internationally. We should also consider that work which pays only 3/4 of the social minimum should not be called a job. That could distort our analysis. It is 3/4 of a job.

Tying the minimum wage to a social minimum is necessary to retain the social status and meaning of employment; to avoid having the welfare system become a subsidy to inefficient or exploitive employers, and to set a base for the meaningful supplementation of income. Otherwise it would be politically impossible to generate enough government commitment to do more than fill the increasing gap caused by labour market inequities and weaknesses.

2. We could then supplement the incomes of all families with children, by a tax credit set at a maximum of about $3500 per child, reducing with income to a universal base of about $250. This would be delivered in monthly instalments, and would replace the family allowance, child tax credit, child dependent credit, and social assistance payments for children. It would be funded jointly by federal and provincial governments, and delivered nationally. We would have moved children off welfare, and would be developing a core income approach to supplementing income, but with a clear expectation and incentive for employment.

3. We could make a major investment in community-based social services. They are needed to maintain a healthy society, and demand is growing. They provide jobs, subsidized jobs, which are badly needed, and which will return tax dollars to government, rather than paying unemployment an welfare benefits. Moreover, Social Services Departments would be able to develop training programs for disadvantaged people with secure knowledge that a decent job will be available. These jobs are also not competing internationally. They will relieve some of the societal stress, which in turn is so devastating to families. They will also help to offset long-term growth in expensive institutional services.

4. We need an active housing policy. Local market conditions which make housing inaccessible to large numbers of families cannot be tolerated. A combination of income-tested subsidies and active supply-side intervention is needed. A quota of affordable units in new development projects, and a policy of making public land available for non-profit housing, need to be actively pursued at a scale appropriate to the scope of the problem. Housing is certainly the most important variable in living conditions of low income families, and they do not have the capacity to adjust successfully to changes in market conditions.

These may appear to be simple solutions, but they are not simplistic. They combine the concept of a social minimum with an active labour market policy. They recognize and support employment, but they also support the capacity for families to be healthy, to fulfil their nurturing role which in turn is vital to the long term health of the society.

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF THOMAS J. COURCHENE
Family Income

Dr. Thomas Courchene - Director of School of Policy Studies, Queens University; author of numerous publications including recent work outlining a comprehensive strategy for social policy reform in the 1990's.

PRESENTATION:

SOCIAL POLICY: CHALLENGES AND TRADE-OFFS

Introduction

Social Policy is both a goal and an instrument of policy. The goal aspect is straightforward: social policy incorporates the range of policies and programs designed to maximize opportunities for Canadians to enhance and employ their human capital. In terms of the policy instrument aspect, the key observation is that Canada, more than any other G7 nation, is integrated into the globalizing economy via the raw-materials side rather than the manufacturing-goods side. Yet, as Peter Drucker has recently pointed out (1989), raw materials appear to be increasingly peripheral to the success of the industrialized economies. While resources will always play a larger role in Canada than in most industrialized nations, the fact remains that we have no option but to follow the industrialized world in making the transition from a resource-intensive to a knowledge-intensive economy. Social policy, both in its human-capital dimension and in its safety-net dimension, thus becomes an integral component of sustainable economic development.

As the Free Trade debate made abundantly clear, we Canadians are proud of our accomplishments on the social policy front, especially when the comparison is American social policy. Essentially, we utilized our cushion of resource-driven growth in the 1960's to mount a comprehensive and generous network of transfers to persons, businesses and government. We were so rich that social policy could be, and in large measure was, designed without reference to key economic parameters such as efficiency, work incentives and regional adjustment. Unfortunately, the buoyant and tranquil world of the 1960s is no longer with us and the advent of the new world economic order no longer allows us the luxury of defining social policies exclusively in terms of social goals. In other words, the shoe is now on the other foot: social policy must be rationalized and re-integrated with economic policy in order to fuel the sputtering engines of growth and competitiveness.

A Trilogy of Challenges

the fiscal challenge

Specifically, as we close out the 1980s there are at least three general challenges facing Canadian social policy - the fiscal challenge, the economic challenge and the socio-demographic challenge. The fiscal challenge is the most obvious. Scarcely a day passes without some reference to the debt and the deficit. Canadians appear to have accepted the fact that the deficit problem is at the heart of many of the problems facing the U.S. (including its trade deficit), but only very recently has our own deficit overhang made more than a dent in public opinion. This is surprising, to put it mildly, since as a percent of GNP the Canadian aggregate deficit (federal and provincial) is about three times that in the U.S. In the recent federal Budget much of the attempted gap-closing came from the revenue side. We can all hope for enhanced real growth and a sharp downward trend in interest rates to make this approach successful. But in the immediate term, the indicators are pointing in the opposite direction. This being the case, the prospects next time around are for some hefty incisions on the spending side, including social policy.

In this context, one might note that since most of Canada's social expenditures are designed and delivered at the provincial level, any rolling back of federal transfers as part of Ottawa's attempt to redress its own fiscal position will re-inforce the fiscal imperative at the provincial level. And while ordinary Canadians may believe that Medicare, for example, is in good shape, they obviously have not been in touch with a provincial treasurer recently. With health care consuming somewhere between 30 and 40 cents of each provincial expenditure dollar and threatening to rise under the dual influences of population aging and increasingly expensive diagnostic and treatment services, the pressure is clearly on for alternative approaches to the design and delivery of health care. If more efficient systems cannot be found, the real "losers" will likely be elements elsewhere in the social envelope - day care, education etc.

The Economic Challenge

The economic challenge plays on two related fronts. At the economy wide level, the challenge is to restructure, to adapt, to become more flexible in response to the new world economic order. As noted earlier, part of this challenge is to make the transition to a knowledge-based society since, increasingly, knowledge is the cutting edge of international competitiveness. Within the social policy framework itself, the challenge is to ensure that the incentives are compatible with this larger goal. For example, in most provinces persons on welfare still face average tax rates well in excess of 100% in the transition from welfare to work. The result is to create welfare traps - this is foolish economic policy and it is also destructive of human values. Recently, the province of Quebec has made important strides in this area by mounting a work-incentive-oriented version of a guaranteed annual income. Essentially it is a wage supplementation scheme (based on family size) where the supplement declines with increasing earnings levels and eventually falls to zero at the point where the family becomes eligible for provincial income tax. Not only does this approach embody a rationalization of "welfare" expenditures but it also integrates the "negative" and positive sides of the income tax system. This is one example of a set of arrangements that satisfies both efficiency and equity criteria. Other provinces will surely follow suit.

The Socio-demographic Challenge

Finally, the essence of socio-demographic challenge is that the needs of the 1990s differ considerably from those of the 1960s. Single-parent families (day care), aging, and skills obsolescence represent the new frontiers of Canadian social policy. This may be the appropriate moment to emphasize the complex and not-so-benign interaction among these three challenges. For example, the socio-demographic needs of the 1990s exacerbate the fiscal challenge. Moreover, failure to come to grips with the burgeoning health care demands may further starve the education system at precisely the point in time when investment in knowledge and human capital is critical to our competitive future. And so on.

Thus, what Canadians are only beginning to realize is that the surest way to place our hard-won social policy achievements in the balance is to attempt to address the social and economic needs and challenges of the 1990's with a social policy framework designed to meet the needs and challenges of the affluent 1960's.

A Trilogy of Trade-Offs

In addressing these challenges, social policy architects must confront three general trade-offs that underlie all Canadian policy areas - adjustment vs. security (flexibility vs. entitlements), private sector vs. public sector and centralization vs. decentralization. It seems clear to me that, in terms of these trade-offs, social policy evolution must of necessity tend toward adjustment and flexibility, toward enhanced private sector participation and, with a few exceptions, toward greater decentralization. While these directions square well with my own view of the world, the message here is not one of ideology but rather one of where the new world order is driving the system. I shall deal with each of these trade-offs in turn, beginning with adjustment/flexibility vs. security/entitlements.

Adjustment vs. Security

Over the longer term, there is no trade-off between adjustment and security - there is no security at all (economic, social or whatever) in an economy that fails to adjust. Therefore, the trade-off here is short term and the issue becomes one of re-integrating social and economic imperatives in ways that conform to Canadians' accepted views of equity. Although I believe that many of the changes required to enhance flexibility also advance equity, it is nonetheless the case that the process of removing some of the existing "entitlements", however gradually, will of necessity impose an income loss on some segments of society.

In a short paper such as this, one can touch on but a few of the relevant aspects of any of these trade-offs. Accordingly, I will focus on just one area. While Canadians are appropriately concerned with removing all sorts of discrimination (sex, age, race, disabled), one of the most pronounced versions of economic discrimination relates to the intergenerational burden that we are placing on the young. First of all, under the guise of such "noble" concepts as tenure, seignority and the like, we have blocked off most public sector employment avenues for an entire generation of qualified young Canadians. Over the last decade the average age of university professors has increased by roughly 8 years. In some departments of major universities there has been no hiring at all. This is nothing short of disastrous for our universities, let alone what it implies on the equity front. (In the context, now that we have the Charter off and running, the remaining rationale for tenure essentially boils down to one of guaranteeing lifetime security, i.e. an entitlement!) It is rather surprising that the young generation has been so accommodating - adopting a set of values that embodies a far greater degree of individual initiative and entrepreneurship and one that rivets its focus more on private sector activity.

Second, the essence of the fiscal deficit is that the current generation is mortgaging future generations. If, as I suspect, future generations will not take well to this intergenerational transfer they have the choice of reneging on their obligations (which is what Milton Friedman assumes they will do) or throwing open our immigration policy so as to bring more working age people into the country in an attempt to offset the increasing "dependency ratio".

Third, when a couple passes the 65-age threshold, the fiscal system confers on them a benefit of roughly $7,000, regardless of their income level. Indeed, the amount actually increases slightly for the very rich. (See Courchene, 1988, p. 28-9). Moreover, the operation of the CPP/QPP are such that, as it matures, the contribution rates will have to triple in order to provide the same real benefits - a further example of how the current generation is loading obligations on future generations.

Given all of this, it was in my view fully appropriate for Ottawa to introduce measures such as the claw-back of the OAS from the wealthy elderly. Indeed, this is only a half measure - the full approach would be to claw back the generous special elderly credits (age and pension-income) as well. It seems to me that those who argue that these progressive (in terms of equity) measures somehow amount to an unwinding of our social policy fabric ought themselves to be saddled with the burden of defending their own position: In light of the nature of the intergenerational transfer outlined above, what is the nature of the principle that would justify a further $5,000 transfer to the elderly rich? More to the point, where in the overall social policy envelope should these monies come from?

A careful analysis of how and where Canada has eroded universality will almost surely point in the direction of increasing the progressivity of the social programs. For example, the sharp reduction of the family allowance a few years ago and the associated introduction to a child tax credit substantially increased the value of family benefits to low-income Canadians. How has this eroded our social fabric or, more generally, eroded the genuine concern that Canadians have toward the less-fortunate among them? Universality is the problem, hardly the solution!

Private vs. Public

In terms of the public-sector/private-sector trade-off, the issues are considerably more contentious. Much of this debate has been cast in terms of the shedding or "privatization" of crown assets (although, as noted below, this is only one aspect of what falls under the rubric of privatization). Some of this has no doubt been motivated by ideology. Personally, I see very little efficiency gain in transferring assets from the public to the private sector if, at the same time, any monopoly rights are also transferred. The correct approach to selling off crown assets should, following Trebilcock and Prichard (1983), be related to one or both of the following:

- the objectives once served by commercial crowns are no longer relevant;
- the objectives are still relevant but commercial crowns no longer represent the most appropriate instrument to achieve these underlying objectives.

In many cases economic progress and in particular the march of technology have made crown ownership obsolete. For example, teleglobe was once a natural monopoly and a case could be made for public ownership. Recently, however, the avenues for "by-pass" have become progressively more available with the result that any natural monopoly argument for crown ownership simply evaporated.

Of more importance than the sale of crown assets, particularly for social policy, are the other aspects of privatization, namely (Heald, 1984, pp. 38-39):

- Privatization of the financing of a service which continues to be produced by the public sector: the respective roles of taxes and charges for public services is, of course, an age-old issue but there is now vigorous advocacy of charges playing a much more significant role;
- Privatization of the production of a service which continues to be financed by the public sector out of taxation: there are many proposals for contracting out work to the private sector and for educational vouchers which could be redeemed with either public or private sector suppliers;
- Liberalization, meaning a relaxation of any statutory monopolies or licensing arrangements which prevent private sector firms from entering markets which, in the past, were exclusively supplied by the public sector.

Rather than focusing on specific policy areas where one or more of these approaches to privatization has been implemented (e.g. the fact that the post office is now showing a profit is of little interest to most Canadians since technology (facsimiles) and competition (couriers) have substantially overtaken the post office as the flywheel of written communication), it is probably of more use to approach the issue in more general terms. In Adam Smith terms, the role of the state was to provide a set of "public goods" - defence, justice, police protection, research, etc. However, the state is now actively engaged in the provision of "private goods" and, in particular, household consumption activities like care for the elderly, day care, maternity benefits and the like. In other words, citizens have come to view the state as having a "comparative advantage" in producing what were formerly viewed as private goods. Under the pressures of the fiscal challenge and because of constraints relating to the sheer management of all of this activity, as more of these private goods fall under the domain of government many of the traditional Adam Smith functions are being thrown back to the private sector; i.e. privatized in one of the four ways outlined above. In what no doubt is heretical to social policy reformers, my view is that this privatization process is what is actually permitting the state to take on these new policy initiatives. Moreover, the process has only begun.

In order to elaborate on this let me focus on one specific area - the public school system. The evidence is overwhelming that the public school system in Canada is failing Canadian youth. The results of test after test reveal that we rank low in any, indeed in every, international ranking. Yet, there have been virtually no serious evaluations of the public school system in terms of devising more appropriate curricula or structures. Canadians are apparently quite happy in simply pointing out that successive generations of university-entry students are progressively ill-equipped in terms of necessary societal skills, whether they be math culture, or literacy related. The Americans on the other hand, (who admittedly have more severe problems with their public schools) are generating scores of local, state and national evaluations of their system. I have now come to the conclusion that the core of the problem with our public school system is its monopoly status. No amount of effort in re-designing curricula or establishing province-wide exams will really get to the core of the problem, namely that the schools are politically driven and bureaucratically run so that few or none of the incentives within the system have much to do with educating students, per se. The most effective way, and perhaps the only way, out of this impasse, is to break the monopoly, i.e. to subject them to competition. In turn, the most appropriate way of doing this would probably be to grant full-value vouchers to parents who then could send their children to the schools of their choice, whether private or public. This is only a partial privatization-funding would be public but the delivery of the service could be either public or private. Overnight, the quality of both public and private education would increase, in much the same way that the announcement of the likely privatization of British Telecom reaped enormous productivity gains, prior to the actual privatization. My own view here is that at least one of the provinces will be enticed to go this route over the next decade. If this happens, the results will likely be so encouraging that other provinces will follow suit or finally implement measures designed to achieve similar results.

One of the traditional concerns here is that the resulting system would become elitist. However, the existing system is also elitist, both in terms of the geographical allocation of public schools and the tendency of the upper-income class to send their children to private schools. With a bit of creative regulation, the system could be opened up to competition (which is the core of the issue) while at the same time ensuring that concerns related to elitism are accommodated.

The essential point in all of this is that the problems of the public school system are not related to the dedication and commitment of teachers. Rather the problems are systemic - essentially the fact that the system is a monopoly and, as such, becomes progressively driven by factors that have little to do with the nature of the product produced.

Decentralization vs. Centralization

In terms of the third trade-off - centralization vs. decentralization - the earlier suggestion was that greater decentralization will be the wave of the future. However, it is instructive to focus on one area where there may be some increased centralization, namely selected aspects of post-secondary education (PSE). In terms of the quality/access/funding nexus that dominates the PSE policy, the provinces have tended to put a lid on funding, to maintain access and to cross their fingers in the hope that quality is maintained. (Up to a point, quality may well be maintained, but after some threshold it will surely plummet). In other words the provinces tend to view post-secondary education primarily as a social program whereas in this increasingly knowledge-intensive world the federal government is tending to focus on aspects of higher education primarily as economic policy, i.e., the new cutting edge in terms of competitiveness. Thus, I would expect Ottawa to play an increasing role in PSE, particularly in terms of graduate studies and research.

In most other areas, however, the system will likely become more decentralized. Consider medicare. With all provinces spending in the neighbourhood of 35% of their budgets on health care, provincial experimentation in alternative design and delivery is in full bloom (alternative payments mechanisms, alternatives to institutional care, contracting out for administration and selected services, integrating social services and health delivery, etc.). Quite appropriately, some of this experimentation is being generated at the local level, i.e. coming from the ground up, as it were. Community organizations are progressively integrating health and social policy delivery systems. One of the messages of Transitions (Ontario's Report of the Social Assistance Review Committee) was that social policy cannot be divorced from issues like education. And more and more, concerns about population health cannot be divorced from a whole range of issues running the gamut from violence in the home to occupational safety. Thus, what we are witnessing is a veritable redefinition, indeed revolution, at the community level in human-resource-policy delivery. In some provinces, this is taking the form of a substantial de-institutionalization and a de-doctorization (to coin a horrible word) of much; of health care, for example. Yet as this process works its way up the bureaucratic ladder it typically runs smack into the reality that, at the top, these activities are still compartmentalized in traditional ways that hinder these new developments. My best guess is that all of this is about to change. As provinces move into "smart cards" for payments systems (another bypass of the postal system!) it will become more natural to combine the payments functions for the health and social systems into one department and to combine the policy aspects of health and social policy into another. Some provinces are already there, or almost.

As a result, the various systems appear to be fragmenting, but in reality they are groping towards a new equilibrium. If one province stumbles across a superior solution to a given challenge, fiscal pressure alone, let alone the economic and socio-demographic challenges, will imply that it will likely be adopted across all provinces. It was experimentation by Saskatchewan in the late 1950's and 1960's that gave us medicare. The nature of the social policy challenges are such that we have little alternative but to innovate again.

One of the major reasons that I remain optimistic about the future of our social programs is that the federal system introduces into the government sphere some of the flexibility and competition that characterizes the operations of decentralized markets. The federal role in all of this is to lay down some national guidelines within which this experimentation can occur. This is, of course, not new - one of the hallmarks of our federation is that Canadians have found ways to create social programs that are at the same time "national" and decentralized. This may not sit well with that group of Canadians that desires truly national programs. But this is largely a lament that Canada is not a unitary state and, as such, these concerns ought to be directed toward the Constitution Act, 1867 or, more generally, to constitutional renewal of a type that would centralize powers. Good luck!

The Charter and Social Policy

As of 1982, or more correctly 1985, there is a new and potentially powerful player in the social policy arena - the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in particular the equality provisions of the Charter. Already the Supreme Court has pronounced on a wide range of issues relating to social programs and the provinces have even altered various provisions in anticipation of court rulings (e.g., the elimination of welfare benefit levels based on age). However, the cases thus far are but a score or so of the literally hundreds of cases that are currently in the pipeline. With some degree of misrepresentation, the challenges relate a) to the age provisions associated with various programs, b) to the definitions of income, particularly questioning why some types of income trigger reductions in benefits while others do not and c) the definition of marital or family status, which feature largely in some programs. Since the tendency is generally to level benefits upward rather than downward, the ultimate annual cost in terms of the social envelope could easily run into the billions. More importantly, if the use of age as a discriminator in programs such as OAS, GIS, and CPP/QPP were struck down this would usher in a virtual revolution in social policy. In this particular case, the likely result would be a move toward some version of an income-tested guaranteed annual income applicable to all Canadians. Relatedly, the Charter is quickly coming to be viewed as preferable to legislatures in pressing for social reform.

It is too early to tell whether the Supreme Court will follow a "social activist" route or whether they will essentially defer to legislatures on these issues. If it turns out to be the former, both Ottawa and the provinces will be forced to address on a much more urgent basis the above trilogy of challenges and trade-offs.

Free Trade and Social Policy

Much of the Free Trade debate was a debate about social policy. Would our "Peace Order and Good Government" approach eventually merge with the U.S. constitutional rhetoric, namely "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness", arguably a more individualistic creed? I have no doubt that the processes of integration and globalization will exert pressure on our social programs. However, these forces are inevitable and would take hold with or without the FTA. For example, the above trilogies have nothing in particular to do with the FTA and, indeed, were originally conceived prior to the agreement (Courchene, 1987).

My bottom line here is that we retain full sovereignty over our social programs and I want to make three points in this context.

The first is that in the late 1940's, Canada's share of exports going to the U.S. was abut 37%. At the time of the FTA it was roughly double this. The anti-Free Trade rhetoric would probably have suggested that (from the perspective of the late 1940's) the doubling of our percentage trade with the U.S. would inevitably mean that we would follow the Americans in terms of social policy norms. Yet this was the very period in which the social policies of the two nations diverged - medicare, equalization, public auto insurance and aspects of UI have no effective equivalents in the U.S.

The second point is that the way we finance our social policies gives us a comparative advantage over large U.S. firms. For example, Chrysler's Lee Iacocca is pushing for some version of medicare in the U.S. because Chrysler spends more on each car for health care than it does for steel. More generally, pressures are mounting for the U.S. to redress their health system and increasingly attention is directed to some version of the Canadian system.

My third point is related to the recent puzzling behaviour of the Ontario government. This province has now replaced medicare premiums with a payroll tax on corporations - .98% for firms with gross wages up to $200,000 per year, rising gradually to 1.95% for corporations with over $400,000 in payroll. In one fell swoop, corporate Canada now is a player in medicare. And presumably it will become an active stakeholder in fear that the 1.95% becomes 3% or 4% in the ensuing years. Here is a province that opposed free trade, largely because of threats of Americanization across a broad range of fronts, and it now does an about turn and brings the business sector as an active player into the operations of social policy. Hopefully, any fallout from this decision will not be laid at the fee of the FTA.

Conclusion

To conclude this paper, it is convenient to focus on the recent federal initiatives associated with the U.I. program. Just prior to the budget, the UI program was "scaled back" (greater earning weeks to trigger benefits, fewer benefit weeks earned for each week of earnings etc.) and the savings were allocated to training. In my view, what triggered this move was Ottawa's commitment to training as part of the adjustment to the

FTA (and in response to the de Grandpre report) and the likelihood that the Supreme Court would strike down the provision limiting access to UI to those 65 years of age and under. This move was essentially revenue neutral - UI was pared back and the resulting savings were allocated to training and the cost of extending UI beyond 65. In the budget itself, Ottawa transferred the funding for some aspects of UI (such as regional benefits) from the consolidated revenue fund to employers and employees - a "forced" privatization of these activities.

In light of this paper, what is of interest here is both the process and nature of these changes. That UI needs rethinking is obvious. Confiscatory tax rates on outside earnings while receiving benefits are only the tip of the iceberg in terms of inappropriate incentives. Paring the entire program down reduces the size of UI expenditures, but does nothing to alter the underlying defects. Another issue long associated with UI was that it progressively became less and less a social insurance vehicle and more and more a program for loading on all manner of social goals. Funding training out of UI simply takes this process one stage further. More speculatively, the privatization of the funding for regional benefits may well throw to the private sector the problem of sorting out this delicate issue.

In terms of process, what we are witnessing here is the workings of the fiscal imperative. My guess is that this process will be repeated again and again. The challenge to social reformers is to regain control over this reworking of our social policy fabric. However, this can only occur if the reformers are willing to come to grips with the realities underlining the new world economic order. In large measure, our social programs ran into trouble because Canadians shut their minds to the emerging global realities and believed we could have Scandinavian style social policies at U.S. tax rates. Unless and until social reformers recognize the above challenges and trade-offs, we may be heading for American social policies at Scandinavian tax rates.

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PANEL PRESENTATION
OF IAN A. STEWART
Family Income

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Dr. Ian Stewart - Former federal Deputy Minister of Finance, Chairman of C.M.H.C. and other economic-policy positions. Skelton-Clark Fellow (in Political Studies) at Queen's University from 1985 to 1987.

PRESENTATION:

The political economy of 20th century industrial nations developed a combination of conflicting characteristics:

1. Its economic drive was essentially market capitalism.

2. Its political legitimation was universal participation.

3. Its economic constraint was the income distribution of pyramid shape, later moulding into the from of a base-weighted diamond, in which the heights of consumption and civilized living are available only to a few.

Any two of these characteristics were compatible: the three together were note. The twentieth century has been a swaying struggle in the market-place, in the political arena, and among the wordsmith and occasionally fighting men locked in battle for hearts and minds over which would be the incompatible element that would have to make way.

-- Fred Hirsch "The Social Limits to Growth"

1. We have been asked as a Panel to discuss "the effectiveness of the current array of income redistribution programs for low-income Canadians, and the future directions of reform of tax and transfer systems. I would be surprised if any of us here today were to testify that the Canadian system of social development informs us annually just how inadequate it is - one dimension of effectiveness - particulary for single-parent families, usually women, for children (over a million in poor families) and for the working poor. Nor, given the large cost of social development

expenditures generally, are we likely to testify that the Canadian system has a particularly "systematic" component of effectiveness. Given deeply held convictions, originating in either reason, faith or prejudice, we are unlikely to agree on either the definition of an adequate system or how far we "ought" to go to provide it. Given a number of recent public examinations of issues, I do believe that our understanding of the components of an efficient system may be more broadly shared.

2. Permit me to begin by engaging in what communications theorists call semiotics - the notion that if you're going to understand what someone is saying it is essential to know where they're "coming from". My remarks on this panel are conditioned by the following beliefs, reasoned or otherwise, which time and your patience will not permit me adequately to defend.

First, it has been my prejudice, increasingly confirmed by what I believe to be reason, that the modern economy and, indeed, the modern work economy would function best, by almost all tests, if there were more, rather than less, equity in the distribution of incomes and wealth. This is a notion that encounters considerable opposition in social, political and economic circles these days. I am convinced, however, that contriving an effective social security system will require at least a minimal consensus that it is so. Second, since we deliver such a significant proportion of re-distributional expenditure through the tax system as well as the expenditure system, efficient and effective reform demands more explicit, I have been a proponent of what is called tax - annual incomes. Third, reform urgently demands integrating thought about social and economic development expenditures generally and not just the income transfer system. Finally, to get the system closer to right, whatever structures of reform are chosen, will require a degree of federal-provincial collaboration that we have not been accustomed to enjoying in recent years. Competitive reform, as with the sales tax, seems to get us only further from home.

3. It may be helpful, in a very crude way without an attempt to be particularly precise, to both clarify terms and get some handle on the scale of the Canadian social system. It is useful, first, to distinguish the total social policy sector and social development expenditures generally, from the social security system that resides within it. For the federal government that social "envelope" consumes close to $60 billion, a little less than two-thirds of all program expenditures. If one adds to this social tax expenditures, tax-point transfers to the provinces, equalization expenditures, and CPP pension payments (totalling over $40 billion), one arrives at a sum of over $100 billion, over which the federal government exercises social policy influence.

4. Of the Federal social development expenditures of $60 billion, approximately $29 billion flow directly to individuals as direct transfers (U.I., OAS/GIS, Family Allowances). Some $13.5 billion is transferred to the provinces for education, health and the federal share of the Canada Assistance Plan. The remainder funds the direct expenditures of the Federal government on a range of social and cultural purposes including native programs, housing, manpower programs, environment, and federal policing. Adding provincial/local expenditures to these sums more than doubles the pot. Canadian governments spend about $30 billion each on health and education. Avoiding double counting, one easily arrives at a sum of over $100 billion spent annually and directly on social development.

Adding back in the wider definition of social expenditure including tax expenditures at all levels, the CPP/QPP, equalization, etc., one easily arrives somewhere between $150 and $175 billion, or close to 30% of GDP directed to social policy purposes.

5. The social security system, the system that flows income to the aged, the unemployed and the unemployable, the disabled, families and the poor, comes to around $60 billion of this larger total. And of this sum, in turn, only about 25% or $15 billion is expressly directed to the poor. A larger proportion of the social security total and of the larger social development total reach the poor, as with health, education and the non-income tested demogrants and tax expenditures generally but an astonishingly small proportion gets there by selective design.

6. Canadians, I believe, share a mystic belief that, through the post World War II period, Canada constructed a leading edge welfare state and the greater risk of failing to address its reform will lie in excessive costs and punitive tax rates that will diminish incentive and effort. The fact is that, though the costs of what we do and the way we do it are indeed high, we are nowhere close to major league performance in the beneficence of our programs. Indeed we are well down in the lower half of the OECD league tables. The further fact is that because of Canada's federalist structure and the collapse, in federal-provincial differences, of early post-war designs for the construction of a social security system in the grand tradition, the major pieces of our social security structure were put in place very late in the day. Planning and consultation for the missing piece, in the Orange Paper and Social Security Review of the early 70's foundered as Western industrial economies foundered leaving a major hole in our system unaddressed, the supplementation of the incomes of the working poor. While the various components for the system for the elderly have brought about a steady contraction of poverty among the aged, social transformations in

family structure have dramatically increased poverty rates among women and children. And while the worst consequences of the '81-'82 recession have receded, structural forces operating on the labour force and dramatic rises in urban housing costs have increased rates of poverty among the working poor.

7. These gaping holes in our safety nets have combined with pressures arising from the fiscal distress of governments and the need to facilitate structural adjustment to a more competitive, post-industrial, information-based world to stimulate a rather remarkable series of studies and commissions examining social system reform.

From varying motives and assignments, The MacDonald Commission, the Forget Commission, the Quebec White Paper on the Personal Tax and Transfer System, the Newfoundland Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, the recent Social Assistance Review in Ontario - Transitions, are prominent examples of official reviews of the system or aspects of it.

"Approaches to Income Security Reform", published in 1987 by the Institution for Research in Public Policy, and Tom Courchene's work on comprehensive strategies for social security reform are outstanding examples of private research and policy prescription efforts.

8. Out of all of this work has emerged a much greater clarity and agreement on the need to distinguish assistance programs for the temporarily or permanently unemployable (eg. single parents and the disabled), from supplementation programs for the working poor, from social insurance programs for episodes of accident, ill health or unemployment. Aside form absolute holes in the safety nets, perhaps the most important findings have been the recognition marking almost all studies of the poverty-trapping tax-back rates in current welfare structures inhibiting the transition from welfare to work. This recognition has combined with the further recognition of the need to revolutionize our eduction and training systems to facilitate life-time processes of training and retraining and to create effective bridges between the welfare and training systems. There is a theme running through all the reform literature that we must return to a focus on providing more equal opportunities, particularly through education and training, and resist the transformation to of opportunity programming into attempts to provide equal outcomes. Finally the urge to reform has been further stimulated by the recognition that new claims, child care, the aging structure of the population, the distressing but robust youth unemployment rates, the peculiar forces operating on housing markets moving single-family housing out of even middle class reach in many communities, among others, will put intolerable

burdens on our social and fiscal systems unless we can manage more systematic solutions.

9. Integration of the tax and transfer system is one such systematic system. The movement in recent federal tax reform to substitute tax credits for deductions, the creation and the further promise to greatly increase the refundable sales tax credit, and the pre-existing child tax credit but with its more frequent than annual payment, are all steps in the direction of such integration. And such integration carried far enough becomes a system of guaranteed annual incomes.

Such a system reforms two critical faults of the present system. It assures, if designed with care, that benefits are "taxed back" at rates of tax that do not become formidable barriers for those who would substitute work income for dependency on the guarantee. Under the present Canada Assistance Plan and the various provincial Acts it funds, and the Unemployment Insurance system, tax-back rates in most provinces are in the neighbourhood of 100%. One dollar of welfare income is lost for every dollar of work income. Such systems provide enormous discouragement to emergence from welfare dependence, particularly for those such as single parents who, at least for a time, must be only available for part-time work or training.

10. The second fault which integration addresses is of course the gradual taxing back of the guarantee from those who are not in need. While the system would be one of universal entitlement, benefits would in fact ramain with only those in need. These two features of the tax and transfer integration make clear the critical relationship between the size of the guarantees and the structure of average and marginal tax rates which must prevail to finance them. Excessive guarantees imply levels of tax-back rate that both destroy the improvement over present systems and provide disincentive more generally. The most common mistake has been to imagine that the guaranteed annual income could deliver too much. More careful designs such as the work of Michael Wolfson, in the IRPP publication referred to, have demonstrated that it is possible to take the present social security pie and redistribute it through tax/transfer integration in a manner that provides guarantees that approach present views of poverty lines. The implied marginal and average tax rates, though higher than in Mr. Wilson's reformed system, are within recent experience.

11. Beyond these virtues, guaranteed annual income systems provide absolute assurance that everybody in the society is covered and without the intermediation of direct income testing. Their proponents would argue that they provide an essential underpinning to the modern workings of the market economy, abate

the intensity of the income distribution struggle (and, hence, of inflationary pressures), and would facilitate mobility and adjustment in an age of rapid structural and technological change. Further they would do so most efficiently, that is for the least expenditure of resources for any level of guarantee aspired to.

12. The agnostics or outright opponents of such radical reform focus on a number of issues. By its nature tax/transfer integration achieves its objectives by stripping benefits that currently flow to those with middle and upper incomes. As has been repeatedly demonstrated in Canada the resistance of entitled groups to such reform can be formidable.
Further many see the guaranteed annual income concept as peculiarly vulnerable to continuous political pressure to enlarge the guarantees. Finally, though actual field experiments have failed to reveal any net disincentive to work under such schemes, many fear such effects.

13. There has recently been an interesting reversal of advocacy roles of the GAI. Though originated by Milton Friedman, as a right wing reaction to the disincentives of the welfare state, its early advocates were of the left. Through the turbulence of the '70's and early '80's it was largely put aside as was social security reform more generally. More recently, as business groups have been heard to endorse its examination, social advocates have become suspicious. The easy ratcheting upwards of guarantees once feared by opponents, has now been seen as the easy containment of guarantees, and become equally feared by social advocates. So far as I am aware, however, the Canadian Council on Social Development continues to lend its support.

14. Whatever the merits of the GAI, it is a useful pedagogic device. It lays bare many of the essential components that must be considered in any reform pursuit. In Canada it makes particularly clear the almost inextricable interaction of the federal government and the provinces in both the personal tax the malfunctioning of current welfare systems, and the lack of a supplementation system for the working poor. It also provides an efficiency test against which to measure the cost of alternative proposals. It is rejected by the Social Assistance Review Commission in Ontario but in its place is offered an elaborate structure of tactical and strategic reforms built on a similar perception of principal.

15. But I do not intend my remarks to be interpreted as single-minded advocacy of guaranteed annual income schemes. One reason I prefer them is that I believe that re-distributional arrangements have the character of a public good - appropriately designed and understood they spew forth external benefits to the

economy, to the polity, and to civility more generally. Market economies, left to themselves, and as Hirsch points out, have a fatal distributional weakness that cannot be repaired except by the intermediation of the collectivity, that is government. And guaranteed income schemes have a transparency about what is being done that, I believe, would encourage understanding and public commitment. Taxes, under such schemes, would come to seem more like grants and less like tribute, benefits more like rights, and less like charity.

I have also, in my dotage, become an advocate of radical rather than piece-meal reform - having become convinced that the clamour of vested interest makes the complexities of a more tactical and strategic course unlikely to get us to where we most urgently have to go. Whatever route is chosen, however, will demand an heroic piece of consensual politics, particularly among the provinces and the federal government, and in inducing broad public support.

PANEL PRESENTATION OF JAMES ANGLIN

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James Anglin - Director, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria. Has worked and published on parent support and education, and child and youth care.

PRESENTATION:

Parent Education is not a new phenomenon - rather it is a rediscovered one. In North America, organized groups of parents have been meeting, with or without professional leadership, for at least 175 years! A review of the history of such groups reveals that the visibility and popularity of parent groups rises and falls in cycles, with their content and formats changing in response to the broader economic and cultural conditions of the time.

One of the classic texts in the parent education field is a book written by Orville Brim, Jr., published in 1959. This book is an attempt to review all of the history, programs, and research done in the area of parent education in North America up to that point. It is an admirable and useful book, with the title, "Education for Child Rearing". In 1980 emerging out of the burgeoning rediscovery of parent education in the 1970's, Brim teamed up with David Harman to update the 1959 study using the same format thus enabling easy comparison between the two volumes. Perhaps one of the most significant developments is immediately evident in the very title of the most recent book - "Learning to be Parents". The change in the title acknowledges a shift in our understanding of both the nature of education and the nature of parenting in the time between the publication of the two books.

The traditional view of education has emphasized the role and significance of the educator in the process. More recent writing has questioned this emphasis and has emphasized instead the role and significance of the learner, and the process of learning itself. Similarly, the more traditional approach to parenting emphasized the function of chid rearing, almost to the exclusion of all other facets of a parent's life. The new title

"Learning to be Parents" was very deliberately chosen by Harman and Brim to reflect these new orientations. We are now in 1989, and change has continued to accelerate in this area as well as in many others. If the third edition of this book were to be published today, what brief title would best reflect our times?

I would suggest something like: "Supporting Family Life". What this title reflects are three dimensions of our evolving understanding of the needs and functioning of parents. First, it recognizes the degree to which, even in the learning paradigm, we have overestimated the purely cognitive dimension and underestimated the significance of the affective aspect. Second, it acknowledges that parenting is necessarily best understood as an element of family functioning, and not in isolation from it. Third, this title implicitly at least, encompasses what has come to be called "the social ecology". In this instance, the social ecological perspective views parenting as situated in the complex relationships spanning the individual, familial, organizational, communal, and societal dimensions characteristic of modern social life. I may even be too out of touch with this suggested title. Another option would be something like: "Empowering Social Relationships", moving even further into the social ecological and human growth perspectives implied in the "Supporting Family Life" title.

I think my point has been made. We are not only working within an evolving physical, social and economic environment, we are working within an evolving conceptual and linguistic environment as well. I would suggest that we attempt to be aware of the words and concepts that we use in our discussions and dialogues here today, and that we be careful not to limit our thinking unduly as we struggle to understand and address the phenomenon of parenting today.

If we look back over almost two centuries of parent education experience (whatever terms we use for it), what have we learned? Not a great deal that we can have much confidence in, it would appear, due to a general lack of systematic and sustained documentation and research. However, I will be so bold as to throw scholarly caution to the winds for a moment, and propose some lessons we should have learned by now, and, on this basis, suggest some directions that those involved in providing parent education, or supporting family life, or empowering social relationships, might seriously consider pursuing, now and in the future. These include:

- focusing more on the "being" of parents rather than simply on the "doing" of parenting.

What I mean by this is that many of our contemporary approaches to helping parents treat them in an instrumental manner. That is, parents are seen in terms of the functions they perform, much like we would analyze the vehicles we drive. Does your family need a "4 x 4 pick-up" parent, a "mini-van" parent, a "motorcycle" parent, or a "compact run-about parent"? Should you add air-conditioning to cool down your hot spots, electric windows to enhance ventilation, or a comfort package to ease the ride for the long haul. There is no shortage of "re-design packages" and "added options" for modern parents to choose from. I would suggest that what parents need is an opportunity to probe their deepest values, their life commitments, in short, the meaning of their lives, in a fundamental and profound manner. Put another way, what our children learn is not what we say, not what we want them to be, and not what we expect them to do. What they learn, above all, is who we are as persons. And we can only fool them so long, and so far, on this dimension. Sooner or later they figure it out. So, our challenge as parents is to live as we would have our children live.

- "normalizing" the involvement of all parents in parent groups.

What I mean by "parent groups" is exactly that - groups of parents talking informally, groups of parents discussing their frustrations and joys, groups of parents meeting with a formal leader or expert, groups of parents getting together every week to challenge and support each other. Those of us with teenagers know how critical peer groups are to our children's growth and development. Parents also need peer groups in order to grow and develop as parents. What I mean by "normalizing" such involvement is simply making it a usual, common, okay, and expected thing to do, much like the way in which the devoted efforts of a few have normalized Lamaze (natural childbirth) classes for pregnant couples.

- paying more attention to parent-to-parent support than to parent training.

The emphasis on support is based on the recognition of the powerful and enduring impact of intimate personal relationships in the nurturing of family life, and the degree to which such relationships are becoming an endangered species in our modern conurbations. Our programs need to foster, above all, interaction - even communion - between parents. Parents need to learn how to change their behaviour, (which of us doesn't), but this process can be greatly enhanced through the development of ongoing supportive relationships.

- shifting the emphasis in our professional education and training programs from an almost exclusive focus on the knowledge and skills required by experts (ie. from content), to a more integrated approach to the adult development of the professional.

In some cases, those being trained to be professional helpers are already parents, and they share many of the struggles of the clients with whom they will soon be working. Those who are not parents are all members of a family of some form or other. To be a healthy family is not to be free of problems, it is to be able to resolve them in a satisfactory way. One dimension of professional training needs to be the recognition, through an encounter with self (one's being in the world), that this is indeed the case, and that personal development cannot in reality be divorced from professional development. This represents a significant challenge for traditional academic programs.

- being aware that parent education has the potential for negative effects as well as positive ones.

I feel it is important to add a cautionary note at this point. The field of parent education and support tends to be pervaded by an assumption that parent education is good, and the more of it the better. Despite this pervasive belief, there is some evidence to cause one to question the validity. Two studies of which I am aware have suggested that some parent education programs may not be benign, and may in fact encourage some of the very outcomes they are seeking to reduce or eliminate. However, few programs have even attempted to assess their effects in a manner which would bring forth such data. It is incumbent on those offering parent programs to ensure that they "first do no harm", by involving the parents in a thorough and qualitative evaluation of their programs.

In concluding my presentation, I would like to offer several observations made at a recent meeting of parent facilitators in Victoria, B.C. This group of about 15 representatives from different family support programs meets on a monthly basis to share information, to plan, and to provide mutual support. This group calls itself "Happy Kids for the Future". I asked these persons on the front line what messages I should be bringing to this symposium. They asked me to mention the following:

1. Co-ordination of parent and family support programs is a difficult, complex, and important task, but nobody seems to be funding or supporting co-ordination within communities.

2. Family life education in the schools is being given second priority to crisis intervention - there is a desperate need for family life education in the schools.

3. It must be mind-boggling for parents looking for assistance. If the professional helpers don't know what each other is doing, and if there is no formal co-ordination taking place in communities, how many families must be giving up before they find the help they need, even when they are actively seeking it?

4. Many parents, especially single ones, need to create their own extended families to provide long term nurturing. Isolation is a big problem for many parents, and many of them have no available extended family to provide support. Perhaps we should be training volunteers to act in this capacity.

5. Parents often do not know how to play with their children, or how to talk to them. We need to offer opportunities for parents to learn positive routing parenting.

6. We need to be clear with parents that parenting is an ongoing, never-ending process, lasting at least 20 years or more. We must not mislead them into thinking that there is a system, or a course, that will solve their problems.

I look forward to joining with you in a lively dialogue on Parenting Today!

PANEL PRESENTATION
OF KATHY LYNN
Parenting Today

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Kathy Lynn - Consultant in Parent Education, Vancouver; develops and presents workshops to parents and professionals; a regular television contributor on family issues.

PRESENTATION:

Pre-Natal and Normalization

When I attended pre-natal classes it was not the norm. It was seen as strange and unnecessary. After all, having a baby is a natural event. Why would you need classes to do what women have been doing naturally for centuries?

But women started attending pre-natal classes and bringing their husbands. These men had no idea why they were there. It fell into the pickles and ice-cream category -- catering to strange whims of their pregnant wives.

That has certainly changed. Today it is NORMAL for parents to attend pre-natal classes. We have learned that being prepared and knowledgeable even for as natural event as childbirth enhances the experience and aids in the delivery.

I want to see parent education normalized in the same way.

I want to see parent education as a preventive, automatic reaction by all parents - not as something for parents in trouble.

I want to see parents treating parenting as an important, worthwhile career choice for which we need training.

KATHY LYNN

Parenting as a Career

Imagine a situation where your father was a carpenter. When you were growing up you were close to him, spent many hours in the workshop learning about wood, about building, about tools. So, you would know quite a bit about carpentry. But, if you wanted to follow in his footsteps you would have to do your apprenticeship and earn your papers just like everyone else. You might have an edge on the rest of them but you would still have to be trained.

It's the same with parenting. We were all parented and some of us were well-parented. But we still need the training in order to do it ourselves. I think it is a bit of a cop-out to use the "increasing complexity of families" to justify parent education. We do not need parent education because family life has become more complex. We need parent education because parenting is hard work requiring skills and training. Parent education, like pre-natal education, would have been as helpful in the fifties as it is today. When we use complexity as the issue we allow all parents who see themselves in nice, simple situations as believing that this is not for them. They will believe that parent education is only for people living in complex family units, not, therefore, for them. This works against the concept of normalizing parent education so that it is seen as automatic for all parents. The increasing complexity of family life speaks to a need to develop programs to meet the needs of a wide variety of parents with different parenting styles based on a variety of value systems, socio-economic status, family structure and educational levels.

Therefore, in order to make parent education part of the normal process we need to recognize that the standard curricula (STEP, Children the Challenge, or whatever you use in your community) only meet the needs of a small group of parents.

Look at the variety of parents and family structures that we see as normal today. There are single parents with a female head, single parents with a male head, blended families, foster families, extended families, communal families and traditional families to name a few and within these systems the varieties and kinds of living arrangements are numerous.

Parenting curricula all too often presumes a traditional family with a middle-class income and more importantly, middle-class values (whatever those are!). We see the range and variety of families and statistics bear out our sense of the changes:

.families today have fewer children--at this point we are operating at a sub-replacement rate of 1.7 children per family.

.childlessness among young marrieds is increasing.
.fertility rate among older women is increasing. This explains the childlessness of young marrieds. But delay sometimes makes childbirth too risk-laden or impossible and certainly often reduces the number of children born to older parents.
.more multiple-career families. In 1951, 33% of all families were dual-career and in 1981, it had increased to 60%.
.in 1986, 12% of children under the age of six were living in single-parent families.

All these statistics simply bear out what we already know. The important thing is to understand the impact this information must have on deliverers of parent education.

If we want parent education to reach all parents we must learn to reach parents where they are, and educate them in ways that are comfortable for them.

So where are they and what do they want? Traditionally parent education has come in two forms.

There are the programs mandated by the Social Services Ministries and Departments for families where there are serious problems. For the most part, these parents are there against their wishes and often they do not really understand the point of it all. Then there are the programs offered in community centres and schools normally under the auspices of the continuing or education division of local school districts.

Theoretically these two forms should meet the needs of all our parents. Unfortunately, that is not the case. With the first group the deliverers of the service are dealing with people with extremely low self-esteem. They failed in some way with their children. They know they need to attend and possibly pass this class, group or course in order to get their children back, or to keep their children. This is not the sort of parent education I am focusing on. I want to see parent education as a regular, educational experience for all parents.

Which leads to the second form of parent education. This is preventive, it is educational and it is available to most people. Theoretically. But why is it not working as well as it should? A number of reasons:

.TIME--many parents are not prepared to allot six or eight consecutive Tuesday evenings to parent education. The two-and-a-half hour course is only appropriate for people who have regular working and personal schedules. These courses also require a predisposition to parent education and a commitment to make this a priority.

.CURRICULUM--the consumer is often at the mercy of the local school district as to which program they receive or which philosophy prevails. Different programs make different assumptions. Some assume that the participants are readers. Whether or not an adult will read is not necessarily related to educational level. Many well-educated adults will not read parenting material whereas other adults with a high-school diploma will devour every bit of material they are offered.

.PHYSICAL COMFORT--some of the locations for parent education are appallingly uncomfortable. Elementary schools, where adults are expected to sit at desks designed for grade five students, are not conducive to adult learning. Some adults are physically uncomfortable in this situation. For others, returning to the school setting is upsetting and disconcerting and there is no way they will learn easily.

.PEER GROUP--community-based programs may attract a wide range of parents from a variety of backgrounds. For some parents this is exciting and fun but for others it is intimidating. For example, a parent who is accustomed to meeting at a solid oak board-room table could be uncomfortable in a community centre, with their chairs arranged in a circle.

Meeting Parents Where They Are

Finally, we need to be aware of settings which parents find natural and comfortable. For many parents the workplace is comfortable and convenient. If they can attend noon-hour lectures on a regular basis they find it helpful. Others prefer to stay after work rather than going out again in the evening. Also, parent education in the workplace can develop a strong and helpful support-group.

But in the workplace, the advertising must state clearly that these workshops are not for parents in crisis but for parents dealing with the day-to-day hassles. The initial workshop should cover the same issues that are part of common discussions in the coffee room.

In the workplace the leader will have to determine whether the group is used to training and can handle a process approach, or needs the safety of a lecture format at first.

Speaking to professional groups is another good way to reach parents. But first, find how they are used to learning. Medical doctors for example, are used to receiving a lot of material in lecture format; lab technicians are used to training which is task-focused and social workers are very comfortable dealing with information on a feeling level.

Training

What this really comes down to is a need for quality training for all parent educators. They must be aware of and knowledgeable about as many of the parenting curricula as possible--there are so many parent educators out there who only know one way, one program and some of them need to deliver it in exactly the order determined by The Book.

They must be aware of and knowledgeable about group process, as well as a variety of ways to make groups work. They also need the flexibility to change to meet the needs of the group and must understand that a group that learns one way one week may respond differently next week. They must be knowledgeable about the basic parenting skills. They need to have internalized the material to the point that they can offer it in a variety of ways, can answer questions and know the pitfalls. They must be conscious of their mandate. In education settings they should not involve themselves in any form of therapy or counselling and must be sufficiently skilled to recognize the differences, catch themselves before they get sucked in and have referral lists for those who need them. They must have good presentation skills, a good speaking voice, and a comfort level leading or speaking to groups.

Finally they must know themselves and their own value systems so they can be as effective as possible with all parents. Only in these ways will we be able to offer adequate, appropriate parent education. If we fail in this endeavour, we will see more and more dysfunctional children. Our children deserve better. Let's work toward quality parenting for all of our country's children.

PANEL PRESENTATION OF BOB COUCHMAN
Parenting Today

Bob Couchman - Vice President, Vanier
Institute on the Family; published on
family issues; teaches graduate courses
to family life educators.

PRESENTATION: * transcribed from tape-recorded remarks *

PARENT EDUCATION

Twenty-seven and twenty-one years ago, my first two children were born. I can recall the experience quite vividly. It occurred at Women's College Hospital in Toronto. I read a book or two about child birth, never having taken any classes. No classes were in vogue in those days - the doctor met several times with my wife and I think I may have been invited along to one of these sessions, but certainly was given no more information than a book or a pamphlet.

In going to the hospital I found there was something at that time called the labour room and I recall wanting to go into the labour room. There were six beds in the labour room and the nurse kind of frowned at this and said, "well there are other women in labour and it a rather private matter and we are not altogether sure that we would like you there". I said, I really want to be with my wife during labour, so they brought in a chair and screened us off.

Six women were in labour at approximately the same time and I must say it was to me a very new experience. At some critical point, somebody came in and said, she is ready to go into the delivery room and wheeled her out and I was told I should go down now and behave myself and stay with the rest of the fathers. I walked into a waiting room, and it was right out of the 30's and 40's. You know the scene - the carpet is worn up and down, the fellows are pacing, the room is filled with cigarette smoke, there are old magazines scattered about and there I waited patiently for the next hour to hour and a half. It seemed like a long, long time, I recall.

Finally, I was called out into the hall, I was told I had a daughter and in a few minutes a nurse came by to show me my daughter and then whisked the daughter away and whisked my wife away and I was told to go home and come back the next day during visiting hours which were such and such a time.

Well 20 months ago, I visited the same hospital, but this time not for the first time. The nursing staff made absolutely sure that I had the grand tour. They also asked if had I taken all of the appropriate classes, and I said no but we had a mid-wife and we had been going on a weekly visit to the mid-wife and we had been going through various exercises with the mid-wife and the mid-wife was present and there was not question about being in the labour room. In fact, there was no labour room any longer. There was a birth room and it was a private room and I was ushered into that room. I sat down there with my wife during the whole procedure. In this case, a caesarian was necessary. So the birth did not occur. This was one of those decisions that comes along late in the process. At that point, I said, "well I understand there is going to be an operation". Come right along they said. So along I went to the delivery room and the operation occurred. My son was born. I was shown my son, in fact, I was with my son, I held him, my wife held our son and I went up to the room with my wife and stayed with my wife for several hours after that, until she was asleep.

The next day I came down and the baby was there in the room. I brought my outward bound sleeping bag and my foam mat with me, because this hospital is still a little behind the times. I threw them on the floor and stayed there for the next two nights.

I found that the experience had changed dramatically over a period of 20 years, thank goodness. The feelings that developed between my son and I were collapsed into a very short period of time. I got to know the little guy right from birth. I can recall my son and daughter. I certainly got to know them and know them very well, but it took a lot longer for me as a parent and I am sure the experiences for my wife were approximately the same. I think things are changing, thank goodness. I am glad to see that more and more people are acknowledging that children have two parents. A female parent and a male parent.

I am glad to see so many men in this room. Yesterday, I did a quick count. We had 109 people in the room, and 27 were male. That is a fairly good ratio on this particular topic. I imagine in some of the other workshops and communications and other issues you'll find a greater ratio of male to female population. But it is absolutely critical in parenting that males acknowledge that they too are active parents. One of the contemporary issues that I think we have to face is that we have to find some way of reaching out to the male population. In looking at what some of the contemporary issues are today, rather than get into methodology, let me just share with you some of the issues that I think need to be covered and need to be carefully examined in parenting programs.

You have to ask yourself, "Why does a person, take a parenting program? Why would they be interested? Or, why would we be interested in having them in the parenting program?" After all, for generations, in fact, as long as we know in civilized and even pre-civilization, people have parented and they have done reasonably well. Given our population today--our grandparents, our parents, our great-great grandparents, etc. probably didn't take formal parenting programs though, as Jim has pointed out, in his paper, one of the paper's he has done, the history of family life education in North America goes back well over a hundred years and we have been making a stencil over those last hundred years or more to formalize family life education. But what are some of those issues that we have to deal with today as contemporary parents?

One of the things that I find parents raising and why they are taking parenting education programs is because they're terribly anxious about their role. They want their children to do the best they possible can. They want them to be a success in life and they see so much psychological damage around them with other children and particularly in their teen years and so much family distress. They say if I can take a course which will tell me how to be a good parent, then I'll feel very, very good. I'll feel confident and successful, so I want to know how to be a good parent, because I want my children to grow up honest and to have friends. I think many parents want a little more for their children than that.

One of the things I do, is on a part-time basis is I teach a course that the Ontario Institute for Studies and Education to students at the graduate level in masters programs and doctoral programs in the Department of Adult Education and my course is on the history of parenting. I look back in parenting history to see how we raised our children back in late middle ages and the renaissance and so on and where we have developed our current methods of approaching our children. These students--our graduate students--are like any other group of people. They come to me and say, what is the answer, as if I were a guru sitting up on a Himalayan mountain which had all the answers of parenting. And frankly, the only answer I have to them is a recommendation that was made by one psychologist that I have considerable respect for, Dr. Jim Garbarino, who is in fact is a student of this particular psychologist Gerry Brothenbrenner. A number of you will know that name, but he made a statement, in one of his books and it is the only statement that I have ever heard that encapsulates how to be a good parent. I recommend that if each of you went away and did this and recommended it to others and they did it, you would have wonderful children.

Gerry Brothenbrenner said, "Every child needs somebody in his or her life who is absolutely crazy about him". That word crazy has a wonderful emotional quality of hugging and touselling the hair and I think we all know what that quality is. The difficultly is how do we day in and day out transfer that or feel that way towards our children. Bettelhym, another psychologist, indicates in some of his parenting books that you can take a child, and if you love that child, turn that child in any direction you want. You can make that child an Alex B. Keaton who is anxious to play the stock market and become successful on Wall Street or Bay Street as the case may be. God only knows, there are number of parents steering their children in that direction and Alex B. Keaton of Family Ties has become quite a role model for many young people today.

On the other hand you can at the same time, using different approaches, raise a child to be very empathetic and sensitive or artistic. It is all in the manner and values and the role modelling which we play out at parents. I guess we have some decisions to make. But one of the decisions which we seem to be making as a society is that we are anxious about the future of our children, particularly their vocational future. Over and over again, when I have done sessions at home and school meetings and groups of parents I have come to the conclusion that if every child ended up in an enrichment program and also an immersion french with due respect to my french colleagues here, immersion english in your case, but if they had an immersion program and they were in an enrichment program and they were able to get into a camp which taught computer literacy, that's it, they would be perfect kids.

More and more parents want vocational success for their children and so we have what is evolving is the hurried child syndrome. We are pushing our children. We are orchestrating their lives. There are scouts on Monday night; there is skating on Tuesday night; there are the piano lessons on Wednesday, etc. etc. In fact, if you look at the lives of most young children and adolescents they begin to resemble our lives and the comment was made today in one of the speakers presentations that 70% of American families don't eat meals together regularly. Think about that in your own life. How many of us sit down to breakfast together? I think that is rather rare these days. Lunch, certainly not, because we are all off working and doing other things except for the weekend, and I doubt very much whether we have lunches together on the weekend. We are lucky in many families, if we get together on Sunday evening for the famous Sunday evening meal.

Because of that frantic scheduling when I was a boy and I am sure when many of you were children to you recollect those kind of nice lazy summer hours when you got to sit back and think about life, play with your friends perhaps go to a local ravine or creek and play in water and do various things, end up on the beach in the summer time. Now our children I don't think have those kinds of memories. They don't have the opportunity to just sit back and reflect a little on a life. And I am not suggesting for a moment that the lessons are a bad thing, but I think we have got to look at the number of things we are trying to do and why are we trying to do them for our children.

The second thing I think we have to realize, and this is a difficult one for us to conceive - this is the first generation, this current generation of children and adolescents, who will do less well economically than the last generations over the past 50 years. Your grandparents were at a certain socio-economic level, your parents you can probably remember them struggling to get ahead--remember when they bought the house and moved from a rented facility - when the family got a new car for the first time--perhaps a summer cottage. And you can remember them gradually getting better and better off. In our lives, generally speaking, we have been better off financially than the lives of our parents. But this generation is going to do less well. And as Roy Bonisteel was pointing out and Dr. Garbarino this morning, the kind of consumer mentality that we have created as that is a value. I am driven crazy every time the Globe and Mail publishes something called the best of Toronto, which is $7,000 watches and BMWs and all sorts of toys which people can buy. These things are the things held out as valuable and we push and have our kids compete in the most aggressive and assertive ways in order that they too will acquire those goods.

I would suggest that it is unlikely that many of our children are going to achieve that kind of material success. I think in education we have to think of some of the other things we would like to give our children, not only values but I think maybe we should look at their interests in the arts and their interests in recreation, etc.

And finally, the last issue I think we have to deal with, which is certainly a contemporary issue is the whole question of gender identity and role models for boys and girls. There has been a radical revolution in the last 20 years. Some people have been dragged into the 20th century in terms of the quality between sexes and other people are quite enthused and pushing ahead in this area. One of the things that we have do for our children is to ensure that they are with this contemporary revolution and that they do see the equality between the sexes and that we don't discriminate on the basis of whether it is a little girl or a little boy or have stereotypes on what we think they should do or ought not to do.

I remember a few weeks ago running into a grandmother, very, very proud of her granddaughter. Her granddaughter was 27 years of age and was a train engineer driving a train between New York City and Washington and back, on the AM-Track run. I thought, how about that, a woman engineer on a train. But I shouldn't have been surprised. That sort of thing is happening more and more.

When it comes to the issues of family life education and non of us here as my colleagues, Cathy and Jim, have said, are only expert in certain areas of family life education is that no matter who we are and what we are there is always a point for family life education. I mentioned earlier on in my presentation, the birth experience. Although too often we think that that's where education ends and it is amazing to me that it doesn't occur to us that once that child is born that there is even more important education to go on. Birth is a physical process and, yes, indeed, it is helpful to have some training and experience with it. But what is even more important is what do you do with that child, when you take that child home.

I happen to live in an area of Toronto which is an inner city area and because it is designated an inner city area by the school board the local schools have wonderful programs which kids in upper middle class districts don't have. My area happens to be about 25 percent Portuguese and 15% Chinese, and has a high level of unemployment and other social problems. Therefore, we have what's called a parenting centre. And the other day I took my 20 month old down to the parenting centre. This was my first trip down there, because I haven't had the opportunity to visit. My wife goes down there with several of her friends on a regular basis. Here is the wonderful playroom very comfortably set up with toys to be loaned out, books to be borrowed, a very expert family-life educator - and she is Portuguese. She knows all about the Portuguese culture and Portuguese family life and their Portuguese, Chinese and Italian women. I was the only male interestingly enough in the room. Watching these children play and watching the kind of informal education that was going on with this Portuguese woman, who was working with the mothers, was absolutely wonderful. And I think to myself, you know there are other ways of orchestrating family-life education than simply putting up a sign saying - on Tuesday night we are beginning our series of six lectures on family-life education and selling tickets for it perhaps and getting the parents to come out on a regular evening basis. I certainly have been part of those programs and have had my fair share of successes and failures.

And I share one with you because it was a good lesson for me.

I was asked on one occasion, because my specialty is adolescents, to do a session on parenting of adolescents for Bishop Strom School in Toronto. Bishop Strom School in Toronto is the equivalent of Upper Canada College and Upper Canada College is the male school for young corporate leaders of our communities. Every major city in Canada has their special elite private school. Bishop Strom School was no exception in this regard--run by the Anglican Church historically, and located in Forest Hill - and just a wonderful place, very expensive to send your children. In any event the night I was to give my talk on adolescents and the girls were invited as well as their parents, their was an overflow audience, there was 250 seats and there was another 35 or 40 people that had to be seated around the perimeter of the room. And I thought, my god, they have heard about me. How about that!

A month later, on a lovely June night, I was asked to do a similar program in Rosemount Public School in downtown Toronto which was an inner city school in St. Jamestown the large housing development for low-income people. Publications had been taken out by the local parents association and dropped off at all the apartments etc. At a quarter to the hour I looked in this room and 250 chairs were set up. I said we will surely get 250 people. There was one elderly lady sitting in the third seat in the front row. They said, "Don't worry. You know, usually these parents come at the last minute". Well, eight o'clock rolled around and still Mrs. Jones was the only person in the front row. And the organizers said, "Well you know, Mrs. Jones will come out to hear anyone". I guess the point is that we have to look at our audience and think to ourselves, now how do we reach this particular group of people, because there are ways of reaching certain groups and ways of not reaching groups.

I want to share a few illustrations with you of programs that I have been involved in that have had a little different twist in the area of family-life education. One program that was launched by the agency I used to work for a couple of years back, was a program for children of divorcing parents. We found that the divorce process, and the separation process, was so traumatic for children that if any group were at risk, children of divorce certainly were. Their parents were desperate to get a program for these children. After trial and error, we discovered that the children themselves, and a children's group with an educational format, could make exceptionally good progress, particularly if we involved the parents in a parent support group at the same time. That little project, which began as a research project funded by Health and Welfare went on to become a very popular program in the agency called, "Part of the Families and

Transition Centre". We monitored that program very carefully because it was a research project, and discovered that we were able through family-life education to lessen the damage done to these children by the process of their separating and divorcing parents.

One of the most telling little anecdotes I remember though from the research, was that we asked the children what were the issues that had changed their family. As you can imagine almost every one of the issues they raised was negative. We said, you know, have there been any good things that have happened as a result of the divorce of your parents. Many children, of course, said yes, there is less conflict and fighting in the house and less arguments. One little girls said, "Yes, I see my Daddy more now than I did before". I thought that is very telling about parenting in this 20th century.

The other program that I would just like to mention is a residential program. If one hour a week for six weeks can be effective, what would be the power of a residential program, particularly for low-income mothers, single-parent families with children? We developed a program called "The Life Program", which we operated at a camp we have forty miles north of Toronto, where the parents come for a long weekend and bring their children. On the first weekend, a very practical program--nutrition--we use the kitchen. The kids get involved, and they cook, and they help their parents. The next one is family budgeting. That is held a month later. These programs are staged about a month apart. And, again, the impact of three days away in the country, working with family-life educators and having their children cared for as part of the program, but working with their kids in other parts of the program, was incredibly effective in bringing along low-income parents. That had been a group that we had struggled to get in the door, because they are very, very reluctant to get involved in family-life education. What we did was we played up the recreational aspect--getting away from the city, trying something new--and that was a very appealing program.

Another program that is not quite family life education--but I'm a great believer in experiential education--was a program that was developed for women who had been battered. This program was not only encompassing their role as parents because, of all parents, women who are battered probably have the lowest self image and the greatest lack of confidence as parents, even as human beings and their relationships with their children are extremely fragile. So it was to build the confidence of the women, and to talk with them about their children and involve the children. What we did after a series of therapeutic, and this is not family-life education, we did a therapeutic program with these women. We took ten of these women on an outward bound course. We took them 120 miles northeast of Thunder Bay for ten days. They were involved in Whitewater kayaking, technical rock climbing, solo work and they were doing it with two female outward bound instructors and a social worker - sitting around the campfire and each day going through these activities of regaining that self-confidence and talking about their role and their children and so on. The power that was given to them, as Jim as said--the empowerment that was worked out through this process, allowed these women to go back into the community and take charge of their lives and to take charge of their children and you could just see their lives turning around.

I would suggest that there are a whole series of things that we can do. And I have given you examples of high risk groups because I worked in a field that involved high risk groups. But I want to end with a little mental exercise, because I think this one is very revealing. I want you, just for the next 15 - 30 seconds, to reflect back at your own childhood. You can take any age--your teen years, your childhood years--and I want you to think about a moment in time. You can choose any moment in time in which you were involved in some way with your parents. You remember it as a family time. It could be with your mother. It could be with your father. It could be with your mother and father. It could be yourself and relatives. I just want you to think for a moment, just pick one little incident from your memory.

Now I am going to give four categories and I would like people just to kind of raise their hands. These are descriptive categories and I'll tell you what the categories are: a social event such as a festival occasion, a birthday, Christmas, some sort of event like that - a holiday, or something of a recreational nature - a disciplinary action, where you had done something wrong and your parents were giving you advice or advising you or correcting you. We will figure out what the fourth one would be.

How many, in just reflecting back, thought of a social occasion? How many thought of a situation that occurred in a recreational sense, on a holiday? How many recollected a disciplinary advice from their parents? Okay, that's about the norm.

The next time you are in a bookstore and you go to the Psychology Section or the section on parenting, pick up any book in the bookstore and just thumb through it. Look at what that book deals with, and I would suggest that 90% of the books that you will pick up off the bookshelf have to deal with sibling rivalry, bedwetting, lying, honesty, teen problems, aggression in children, etc. In fact, most of the books that are on the bookshelves, and most of the material we provide in our curriculum in family-life education, deal with those moments when we are interacting negatively with our children and trying to solve a problem. That is not surprising. We all need advice in that area. But the power of the family has more to do with the recreational and social aspects of childhood. And the things that are left with us that make us who we are today were not the good advice that our dad gave us when we were 14 years of age, but likely some event that took place when we were fishing with our father0 or some event that took place on a holiday with uncles and aunts. I think we ought to look, as parents, at the power of social and recreational activities with children.

Roy Bonisteel was asked today, how do you find the time, the time seems to be so precious. And he ultimately had to say you just have to make the time, if its a priority, you have to make that time. The most good that comes in our parenting are those informal moments, those moments around the dinner table at night, those moments of wrestling with your child, those moments of reading the bedtime story, the taking them to the zoo, going on a summer vacation, building sand castles on the beach, all of those events, involving Mom and Dad, are the most powerful influences on our children. And if as Brofenbrenner says, we really are crazy about our kids, and we do the right things in terms of those pursuits, and we use some common sense and good expert advice when it comes to those incidents which will inevitably come along in the lives of all families - we correct our children with fairness and justice, I think we will find that we can be good parents. And I think those who we instruct will also go on to be good parents.

Volume

2

REGINA JULY 1989

Symposium

ABOUT

SUR LA

VOL. 2 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIODS

HONORARY CHAIRPERSON:
Her Excellency the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauvé, P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada

SPONSORED BY:
The Canadian Provinces

HOSTED BY:
The Government of Saskatchewan

A Symposium About Families is presented by direction of the Annual Premiers' Conference of 1988.

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FOREWORD

A Symposium About Families was held in Regina, Saskatchewan, July 11 - 14, 1989. It was initiated by the ten Premiers of Canada at their annual conference during August of 1988. The Symposium was cost-shared by the provinces and hosted by Saskatchewan.

Thirty-four plenary speakers and panellists were invited to present information at the Symposium. Topics included Education and Families, Law and Families, Work and Family Life, The Health of our Families, Serving Vulnerable Families, The Family in the Community, Parenting Today, Family Income, Communication With and Within Families, and Canada's Families Today.

Over 750 delegates from across Canada attended the conference and participated in the plenary and panel sessions, the question and answer periods, and the delegates' workshops.

Over 50 percent represented almost 300 non-governmental organizations, including: churches, religious associations and colleges; Indian/native service agencies, bands and associations; family crisis, adoption, children's aid, youth, teen mother, women's, sexual assault and child care agencies; home economist agencies; home and school associations; schools, school boards and associations, community colleges, technical institutes and educational associations; health associations, home care services, hospitals and nurses associations; alcohol and drug treatment agencies; community-living associations/agencies; seniors associations; police forces; municipal governments; housing agencies; human services professional associations; policy institutes; employment agencies; welfare advocacy; businesses; social development associations; private law firms; multicultural agencies; television producers; libraries; performing arts and other individuals and families.

Governmental representation was composed of delegates from agencies dealing with: family, community and social services; employment, labour and human resources; municipal affairs; education and adult education; health; housing; women's directorates; recreation; agriculture; finance and revenue; alcohol and drug abuse; public service commissions; consumer affairs; transportation; liquor commissions; human rights commissions; multicultural; inter-governmental affairs; rural affairs; executive councils; secretary of state; pension agencies, ombudsman; justice; crown corporations; economic development and business; community event agencies; Indian and native affairs.

Honourary Chairperson of **A Symposium About Families** was Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauve, P.C. C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada.

Chairman of the symposium was Mr. Knowlton Nash who was for a decade CBC's Chief Correspondent and Anchor for The National, from November 1978.

PURPOSE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The purpose of **A Symposium About Families** was to allow governments and others to be exposed to a broad spectrum of views about supporting and strengthening families. It was a forum for diverse perspectives to be shared - for governments and delegates to learn from the experiences of Canadians from other professions, other communities, other regions and other cultures. The symposium was a gathering where people could meet others of similar backgrounds or professions, with whom they might exchange ideas and solutions. The symposium served as an opportunity for delegates to put forward ideas on what issues families face, and what can be done about these.

Changing economics, shifting cultural realities and social forces affect families today in many ways. High technology, affluence, emotional estrangement and social dislocation have all created broadly divergent perspectives on families today.

Increased mobility, declining birthrates, the reduction in support of the extended family and the increase in single parent or blended families have changed our perception of the traditional family unit. Alternate family arrangements have increased and become commonplace. Families are experiencing more separation, divorce and remarriage. There are single parents, childless couples and single households. Families are becoming smaller. Career and economic factors cause children to move away from the larger family network, testing the bonds of the extended and nuclear family. Seniors are an increasing proportion of our population and a "seniors' lifestyle" has been created. More people with physical and mental disabilities are achieving greater independence today in family settings within the community.

Changing and adapting to new circumstances creates stress and difficulty. People rely upon those around them for stable, supportive and loving relationships. We will continue to find stability and support in our families, in whatever form they take.

ORGANIZATION

A Symposium About Families was hosted by the Government of Saskatchewan and arranged by the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services.

Saskatchewan government officials initially met with representatives of the provinces and other interested agencies across Canada to identify the form and content of the symposium. An organizing committee was then struck and work began on developing the conference.

The organizing committee was composed of:

Mr. Henry Kutarna, Deputy Minister of Social Services
Dr. Allan Hansen, Assistant Deputy Minister of Social Services
Mr. Dan Perrins, Executive Director of Family Services
Mr. Eric Johansen, Symposium Coordinator
Ms Lynn Allan, Events Planning Coordinator
Ms Brenda Szala, Events Planning Coordinator
Mr. Roy Rysavy, Staff Volunteer Coordinator
Mr. Lorne Dunsmore, Program Coordinator
Mr. Alan Gill, Communications

Over 200 volunteer staff from across the social services department and other Saskatchewan departments and agencies were involved in producing the symposium.

Panel Sessions

Persons from across Saskatchewan and Canada arranged for speakers and moderated panel sessions during the symposium.

Education and Families Panel:

Moderator - Diane Gagnon, Secretariat for Family Affairs, Quebec

Selectors - Donna Krawetz, Saskatchewan Education
- Carol Powell-Ariano, Saskatchewan Education
- Rita Archer, Saskatchewan Education

Law and Families Panel:

Moderator - Brian Barrington-Foote, Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Justice
Selector - Betty Ann Pottruff, Saskatchewan Justice

Work and the Family Panel:

Moderator - Vicki Bales, Director, Family Support, Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
Selectors - Joan Greaves, Saskatchewan Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department
- Linda Dewhirst, Saskatchewan Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department

The Health of Our Families:

Moderator - Stan Sojonky, Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan Health
Selector - Laura Carment, Saskatchewan Health

Serving Vulnerable Families Panel:

Moderator - Steven Rumsey, Public Trustee, Ministry of Attorney General, British Columbia
Selectors - Richard Hazel, Saskatchewan Social Services
- Linda Wrigley, Saskatchewan Social Services

The Family in the Community Panel:

Moderator - Carmen Moir, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Services, Nova Scotia
Selector - Dave Hedlund, Saskatchewan Social Services
Bob Creasy, Saskatchewan Social Services

Parenting Today Panel:

Moderator - Marie MacDonald, Director, Child and Family Services, P.E.I. Health and Social Services
Selectors - Trudy Usher, Saskatchewan Social Services
- David Rosenbluth, Saskatchewan Social Services

Family Income Panel:

Moderator - Sheila Devine, Asst Deputy Minister, Newfoundland Department of Children and Youth Services
Selector - Sheldon McLeod, Saskatchewan Social Services
Naomi Mellor, Saskatchewan Health

Canada's Families Today Panel:

Moderator - Doris Mae Oulton, Executive Director, Manitoba Women's Directorate
Selector - Brain Rector, Saskatchewan Social Services

Communication With and Within Families Panel:

Moderator - Stan Remple, Deputy Minister, Alberta Family and Social Services
Selector - Lorne Dunsmore, Saskatchewan Social Services

DOCUMENTS

Permanent records of **A Symposium About Families** were kept and are being made available to the provinces and to requesting delegates.

Because of the amount of information generated by the symposium, the documentation has been divided into three volumes:

Vol 1 SPEAKERS PAPERS,

Vol 2 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIODS, and

Vol 3 DELEGATES' WORKSHOPS.

Volumes 1 and 3 were published during August 1989.

This Volume (2) was published during November 1989. It documents questions and answers which occurred following each panel session. It also contains the messages and remarks of Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauve, Governor General of Canada; Premier Grant Devine; and, Conference Chairman, Knowlton Nash.

The question and answer content of Volume 2, QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIODS, was amended by the panel session selectors for easier review of readers.

The set of the three Volumes documenting **A Symposium About Families** may be ordered from:

Saskatchewan Social Services
1920 Broad Street
Regina, SK S4P 3V6

The cost is $20 per set (covers printing costs only).

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

**Her Excellency the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauve,
P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada**

The family is critically important to all of us. While its definition has been modified throughout the ages to accommodate the realities of the times, it remains the most fundamental and vital social structure of our society.

Canadian institutions and traditions have been challenged by the pace of change around us. High technology, affluence, emotional estrangement and social dislocation have all contributed to the broadly divergent perspectives on families today. Increased mobility, declining birthrates, the reduction in support of the extended family and the increase in single parent or blended families have changed our perception of the traditional family unit.

It is essential that the transitions we observe in contemporary families do not cause us to lose sight of the importance of their existence. This makes our symposium especially important. It will serve as a catalyst, drawing together divergent social sectors to provide a fresh beginning for a new dialogue about the continuing importance and strength of Canadian families, in all their forms.

As Honourary Chairperson of "A Symposium About Families", I am pleased to welcome the delegates gathered here today and to congratulate them on their ongoing commitment to family life.

OPENING REMARKS

Honourable Grant Devine
Premier of Saskatchewan

Host Premier of the Symposium

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, families and friends. On behalf of all the premiers of Canada who initiated this symposium at our conference here last summer, and on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan who has helped make this happen, welcome to this symposium, this historic symposium, about families, and welcome to Saskatchewan. I've been asked by Her Honour, the Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, to bring her greetings as well as best wishes for a productive symposium. Chantal and I want to thank the organizers for putting together such an excellent national conference inside of one year. We are fortunate to be the host province, and they have done us proud.

When you put something together on the family, you have thousands and thousands of experts. Everyone knows about families. Everyone knows about all the social, financial, political, and historic characteristics about families. So you are sure to have a very lively discussion. It takes just a tad of courage, that the Premiers recognize when they put this together, to say we're going to put together a national conference about families. What's really important is that you decided to participate. You have responded so positively to this initiative about the family.

We are pleased that so many representatives from so many walks of life from across the country have come to participate on behalf of family life. The success of a national conference relies on the contributions that come from a wide variety of viewpoints. The families of Canada, certainly, will benefit in the long run from the family of Canadian thought and opinion that is represented here this week. The diversity of the regions of Canada speak for themselves. The diversity of backgrounds represented in this room this evening are key to this conference. We have individuals, families, employers, employees, politicians from provincial and municipal jurisdictions, academics and service providers, volunteers, and many media people. I believe we will emerge from this symposium with a better understanding about families and family issues, and a clearer sense on how we might be able to meet the obligations of the next decade and the next century.

We are all here because we care about our own families: about the families who touch our lives. This is a very personal conference. This is about us and our families. We care about family life in general across Canada and indeed the global village. For all its strengths and weaknesses, the family is the single most influential aspect of our social and economic lives, especially for children. It's up to each of us to develop a better understanding of our changing society and our changing family structures, and our changing roles as parents, counsellors, municipal, provincial, and national leaders. The challenge of today is to understand the changes that are taking place within the current family structure and to respond in a meaningful and constructive fashion. We must understand the issues, formulate positive responses and look to the future, and indeed, look to the world.

Chantal's parents are immigrants, and her dad turned 100 in January. He was putting a message together for all his kids when they came to visit him on his hundredth birthday. He lives at home with his wife, who is 81. He has lots of family and lots of kids. He said, "When I was a boy growing up in Luxembourg, we didn't have any electricity, telephones, automobiles, tractors airplanes, computers, space travel, or polio vaccine. I've seen a lot in a hundred years. I think I read in a newspaper that every ten years now, there will be as much change as I've seen in the last hundred." Families are going to have to manage change. Technology is here; we don't manage it, it will manage us. Communication...it is the information and technology age.

Canadians working together will learn together in the area of family structures. We must listen and respond, share our experiences, understand, and cooperate. This form seems to be the ideal avenue for this type of constructive dialogue. What keeps your families together? What keeps your communities helping families? What works? There are many highly successful, important initiatives for families already in place in every province in Canada. We heard two ministers speak of them this evening. Canadian programs which provide income support, preventive health care, child/day care, protection for children suffering from abuse and neglect, programs for alcoholism, substance abuse, and many more. Everyone's involved. We believe that the people of Canada and the communities and governments should work together in a partnership and continue to build on these programs we have from coast to coast. Every jurisdiction is looking at better ways to do this and build on these programs for the future.

Even more important, we must develop new strategies that will encourage and assist families to help themselves as well, to find new solutions by their means in their communities with each other, so when other people aren't there, they carry on. Governments, communities, and families need the kind of support, advice, and guidance that comes from the experiences and knowledge of others in the family, community, and certainly other professionals. We need to share that knowledge from a regional perspective as well as a practical one. Perhaps together we can find the real answers. That is the challenge that faces us through this conference.

We have 34 speakers and plenary and panel sessions to generate ideas and to stimulate discussions about the family and the community: legal, health and educational issues, work and income, serving vulnerable families, and being a parent today to name just a few. I encourage all of you to take part in the discussions at the delegate workshops Friday. Through idea sharing with each other we can build a better protective safety net for families across Canada, and we can given them, most importantly, hope for the next decade and well into the next century.

Saskatchewan, as you might have known, has been known as a province of compassionate people, as well as competitive people. Mrs. Barry talked about holding hands. I want to put this in context with the way Saskatchewan is. This is a story first related to me by Father Larre. As you know, when you come into Saskatchewan, you will see that there are miles and miles of wheat. (In about a month from now, it's about this high - if the Lord helps us with some rain - and it's gold, and it's as far as you can see). It's like a sea of wheat. One fall, a young farmer was getting his combine ready to go, and he had his little 4 year old with him. He looked around and he couldn't find him. He thought, " I bet he's wandered off into the wheat", because the wheat fields are all over. So he went out into the wheat fields and he couldn't find him. He ran back into the house and told his wife, "Honey, I can't find him. We better go out and look." So they looked and called out his name, but they couldn't find him. Rural Saskatchewan is not any different than rural New Brunswick or rural Alberta, or rural anywhere. At this particular point in time, there were community telephone lines so they went in and put in a long ring so that everyone came to the line. They said, "We've lost our little boy. Could you come over and help?" So people came over from miles to help this family. They looked all that afternoon and night, they looked all the next day and night and they couldn't find him. Early in the morning of the third day the father stood in the yard and he was exhausted. Nobody knew what to do. So he said, "Why don't we join hands and walk across the wheat." And they did. They walked ten paces, and they found the little boy, but it was too late.

The young father turned to his friends, family, and neighbours, and said, "If we had only held hands sooner..."

I believe that when the premiers of Canada got together and talked about families and holding a national conference, these are men from all political persuasions. This isn't about politics. They talked about holding hands sooner. They talked about their own families and relatives, their own friends, communities, provinces and professional staff, and all those people who help to keep families together and healthy, and to raise that most important single renewable resource that we have: our children. They have no more than just reasonable expectations at this conference. But they know it's on the money. It will depend on if you're prepared to hold hands and work with your neighbours and your friends from across Canada and indeed across North America in coming up with ideas and suggestions to make the family as strong and as powerful as we possibly can so that it can manage the change in technology and all the temptations from chemicals to everything else that we face into the 1990's and 21st century.

Our next conference for the premiers is in August in Quebec City, and we will again place family policy as the number one issue on our agenda. I want you to know that the discussions, ideas, and policy building that comes out of this conference will form an important part of that agenda of all the premiers. Although I represent my colleagues as host of this symposium, please realize that all ten premiers are listening to this, and will be hand-delivered the results of the ideas, recommendations, and suggestions coming from this symposium. We are looking forward to your wisdom, insights, and ideas. If you ever wanted ten premier's ears on a subject, (we've had a pretty good crack at it on the Constitution), if you ever wanted it on the family, it's there. They are going to be listening and watching. Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauve, Governor General of Canada, is the honourary chairperson of this symposium. I am certain that she is enthusiastic as well about the outcome of this conference. Her thoughts will be with you over the next few days. Again we're very glad to welcome you here. We look forward to participating in some of the discussions. Thank you all for sharing your wisdom and ideas with all Canadians. Welcome to Saskatchewan and to Regina, and have a historic, stimulating conference.

OPENING REMARKS

Knowlton Nash
Conference Chairperson

I am delighted to be able to be here to share with you this symposium about families and especially good morning to our host, Premier Grant Devine, who has taken time out from a very busy schedule to be with us this morning. Premier Devine and I would like to introduce a couple of other Ministers who are with us this morning. The Minister of Social Services for Saskatchewan, Grant Schmidt, is joining us this morning. And the Minister of State for Children's Services in New Brunswick, Mrs. Jane Barry. And from the neighbouring province of Alberta, the Minister of Family and Social Services, John Oldering.

If I may, I would like to say a few words before we begin the serious business of what the Regina Leader Post described yesterday editorially as a family get together. It was a very good characterization, I thought, of what this symposium is all about. But I am delighted to be here for professional reasons because the field of family really encompasses almost every aspect of our society.

You just have to look at the news headlines in the newspapers or see them on television to see that and so, in a sense, as a journalist, I have spent my life really covering families in one way or another - families of one kind or another. And in that coverage, it's clear to me that the family is a basic building block of our society, the family is the future.

And I am also delighted to join you today and for the next couple of days for personal reasons because I have come to Regina straight from a holiday at the beach with my own family, the children and grandchildren. And when I look over some of our documentation and read the newspapers and watch the television journalism reflecting what's happening in our society, I look at the challenges facing the family today, and I look at my own family and I have to confess to being a bit frightened when I see all the forces that can damage or destroy families...from drugs to job insecurity, from violence to the "me first" selfishness of our times...the contemporary epidemic of runaway consumerism. It all, in a way, gives new meaning to the conspicuous consumption Ken Galbraith talked about a few years ago.

But as my wife, on our holidays, my wife and I played in the sea or on the beach with our 2 grandchildren - one was aged 7, one aged 4, we rode around on bicycles, went fishing with them, or just talked together. I found myself just a little bit startled by some of our conversations. I thought that we, along with their parents, were helping to instill in them a sense of values, a belief system, to help anchor their lives. But what I found out, somewhat in a startling way to me in the process, I found that I was also learning as much as I was teaching or trying to teach. In fact, one of our speakers here speaking tomorrow, Dr. James Gabarino, has just published a new book entitled "Children as Sources of Information." And I found my own grandchildren were fascinating and enlightening examples of sources of information. I found they were teaching us what family priorities really were. And they weren't about a new car or stocks and bonds or the latest office politics, but were about the joy of simply being together, of sharing, sharing thoughts and sharing things, sharing dreams and sharing fears. Suddenly I found I was more interested in explaining to my 4 year old grandson the mysteries of high tides and low tides than I was about a documentary that I was in the process of doing or the Journal on the Origins of World War 2 or even worrying about who the next president of the CBC might be.

And even after all my years in television, I found just how much impact television has on 4 and 7 year old minds. Whether its Sesame Street or Ghostbusters, its really quite breathtaking, the impact of television on those young minds. And all this not only surprised me but I have to confess it pleased me too because I got a lot more satisfaction out of turning their occasional tears to laughter, their occasional fears to understanding than I ever thought possible.

And so, as I said, I have a lot of pleasure in contemplating the discussions we are going to be having at this symposium for the next couple of days because we all have a stake - as individuals and collectively as a society in the issues of the family. Indeed, as I was flying in from my holiday, which was in Florida, there was an editorial in the New York Times, their lead editorial yesterday which was entitled "What's a Family?" and discussing at least some of the issues that we'll be discussing here. So there is enormous interest in family issues, especially here of course in Regina, where not only is there this symposium but what's called an alternate symposium going on also discussing these issues and in a way, that's pretty good, because it increases the attention being paid to the challenges facing today's family. And in our discussions here over the next few days, we'll be looking at a lot of those issues in both micro and macro ways.

As you know, this symposium drew out of the Premier's Conference a year ago and their call for this symposium is a very encouraging first step, in a formal way, to articulating the many challenges of the family today and then to at least discuss priorities. It will be an opportunity to hear the visions of people who have made it their life's work to study the various aspects of the family. This is a forum for diverse aspects to be shared, even to be argued, because obviously there will be conflicting opinions, there will be differing agendas. And the symposium provides an opportunity not only to listen, but to contribute, to put forward your own ideas. We are obviously not going to be solving all the problems of the family, but we may well by Friday have at least a sharper focus on what those problems are, perhaps establish some priorities and command some political attention.

As Premier Devine said last night, the family is "number one" on the Premier's agenda when they will be meeting in late August in their annual conference, and their ears will be open. So this is an opportunity right now for those of us here to pass messages into those ears.

There are delegates here, as you know, from all ten provinces. And all of you at this symposium are leaders and activists and communicators in the field of family issues, whether in the public or in the private sector.

What happens, out of this symposium, essentially, really depends on you. It can be just another couple of hundred pages of a report of a meeting that the Premiers and other political leaders will quickly thumb through, or it can be a springboard for action. It all depends on what you do with what you hear and what you feel, and what you think as a result of these meetings over the next few days, remembering as Premier Devine said "Those Premiers' ears are open."

The family is a subject of such enormous complexity. There are so many different aspects. Obviously, there is a great deal to talk about. I'm no expert, I don't have any answers, but I do have concerns and questions that are going to be addressed by the speakers you will be hearing.

We will have four plenary speakers and after each one at our plenary sessions, you will be able to question those speakers. And we will have panel sessions as well, with 30 panellists, which will be held after each of the plenary discussions.

I should remind you as well that during the delegates information exchange meetings at 5:00 this afternoon and tomorrow, you can exchange information with and meet people from other parts of the country.

And finally our workshops will present you with a chance to express concerns about families and ideas on family life. Permanent records of the symposium will be kept. This is explained in some detail in your program brochure, but I should note that video recordings are also going to be available to all the delegates as well as written documentation of the plenary sessions, the panels and the delegate workshop proceedings.

I suppose its fair to say that there is no such thing as a true expert on all the issues facing the family. But there are of course experts on particular issues of the family. And the first of our expert speakers at this symposium is Dr. Susan A. McDaniel.

Introduction of Dr. McDaniel followed...

CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

Panellists: **Dr. Robert Glossop**
Evelyne Lapierre-Adamcyk

__Question__:

I would like to address the question to either one of your panel members. If they can tell me if there have been any studies done that would show the high rate of violence as compared to common-law relationships and traditional marriages.

__Lapierre-Adamcyk__:

I don't know of any of these studies. Maybe that has been done. To observe this type of reality through general statistics is still impossible. We always have to go through surveys in order to be able to identify those couples who are being legally married. It makes any kind of studies on these realities very difficult and more expensive because you have to go in the field and interview people and collect new data each time you have a question you want to study. The research on violence, I don't follow that research and I'm not aware. Maybe other people here could answer that.

__Glossop__:

I'm sorry I can't answer your question well. I think there are people here in the audience who are more familiar with the entire family violence literature than I am. I have not seen work that tells us the incidence rates of violence within families that are cohabiting and those that are married. I do know there is an elevated incidence of abuse of children in families in which there is no biological relationship between the man and his children, step families or common law relationships. I do not know whether that carries over to other kinds of family abuse against women, the elderly or not. There may be people in the audience who would choose to fill us in.

__Question__:
I wonder if you would be able to fill us in on the comment on the changes in the roles of family members. There has been some allusion to caregiving both for the elderly and for the young.

It seems to me that is a very critical issue in terms of looking at family structure. If we look at family policy through the first 150 years of the industrial revolution, it was very expedient to have a model of mother staying at home, so mother care became equated with good care or perfect care. We have not yet as a society struggled through the notion of mother care and I think there has probably been some shifts in roles. Is there any information on that, are we heading the right way?

Glossop:

I must tell you that I hate to define new crises. It seems that our society has all sorts of crises and as soon as we say that someone is in crises, we martial all sorts of forces to try and solve it. At the risk of contradicting my own best ideas, we may in fact be experiencing something like a crisis in care. The group most subject to poverty in our society right now is children. They have assumed that status because the elderly are no longer the most likely to be poor. Although the elderly do not wind up at the top of the poverty statistics anymore, it is perhaps simply because they are the richest of the poor. I don't think we have yet dealt fully and adequately with the income needs of our senior citizens. It seems to me that in contrast to what is happening in the United States where the interests of the young and the old often get pitted against each other, we need to recognize what the young and old share in common is that they do not have a clear relationship to the labour force. They are vulnerable because their identities are not tied up with the labour force and they exercise little real economic or financial power, and they have little economic or financial security. Those groups that we are now worried about whether or not we can care for them adequately, are not accidentally at both ends of the age spectrum. I think our society faces a real dilemma in how it will get away from the marginalization of anybody who is not active in the labour force. How we will indeed accord recognition, support, legitimacy, to those people who will take on those caring roles, whether or not it is within families or whether or not it is those people who work in their professions, to care in our society. I think it's a dilemma that will become increasingly pressing in the next 20, 30, 40 years.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

Just one comment to add in regards to poverty among the elderly and the manner in which society seems to have been able to combat it to a certain extent. There is study from Russell Wilkins which demonstrates that support for the elderly succeeds fairly well at decreasing the number of old persons who would be in the category of "very poor", at least to bring them among the people who enjoy a certain amount of comfort.

Therefore, for the children who are affected by poverty, our welfare payment system does not really succeed to move these families away from poverty to less poverty or to comfort.

Question:

Dr. Glossop, I just wanted to commend what you said in terms of how forming policy tends to affect people in different ways. In effect saying, perhaps, that giving some people rights or privileges automatically means relatively taking them away from someone else. I think it's an important concept in a free society to realize there is no free lunch in that regard. You mentioned some brief points about the policy of families. Could you take a moment to enlarge on those points you mentioned very briefly when you talked about Dr. Herberg's paper.

Glossop:

I will try to elaborate on this notion that the different members of families can be affected differently by policies and programs, which I understand to be at least one of your interests. It is a very tricky issue - I'm going to be quite honest - I'm ambivalent right now. We have made good progress I think, as a society, in learning to respect and providing mechanisms to respect and support the needs, circumstances, and indeed rights of individuals. When we forget for instance that women are also likely to be daughters in a caregiving relationship to their mothers - they may be wives, mothers themselves, sisters. We often forget in our efforts to help children that they are not atomized, isolated, but they are indeed in relationship with others. That we wish to keep our commitments strong in those relationships and often I think we've been not successful enough in trying to preserve and protect the rights of individuals, and at the same time realize that most of those individuals are in, and choose to be in, relationships which impose upon them certain responsibilities and obligations. It's a challenge I suggest for the policy maker now, because we do live in a society and culture which is incredibly oriented to the individual. I think it is time to recognize it as individuals who choose to be in those relationships which bind us. The other side of the equation, if you like, is to recognize how our policies and programs affect different families differently, and I gave some illustrations of how that can happen. What it calls for is a genuine appreciation of the circumstances of others. That we have to understand that we cannot view the needs and circumstances of families through our own experience, our own history of family, but indeed the diversity of families requires us to work hard to understand and to respect the different circumstances of different kinds of families.

Recognizing that families will differ by virtue of what part of the family life cycle they are in, what kind of community and city they live in, what kind of resources are available to them, by virtue of how they choose to divide responsibilities for the performance of both formal and informal productive work activities, by reference to their heritages, of ethnic, religious and cultural convictions. Families differ in all those ways. They also differ, of course, by virtue of the capacity of their various members. I think we have to keep in mind families differ in all these ways and then begin to ask which dimension of family is it that we are trying to have an impact and influence on when we are trying to fashion a policy or program. I've tried to create the sort of 3 or 4 minute version of the answer to your question.

Question:

Ms. Lapierre-Adamcyk, there are some people who claim that cohabitation outside marriage is a conjugal phenomenon, that is that the development of cohabitation outside marriage in Canada would be related either to the economical conjuncture that was particularly bad in the beginning of the 80's or the demographical conjugal, that is the generation of the Baby Boomers moving to ages where they are more likely to get married. I would like to know if according to you, cohabitation outside marriage will remain a prelude to marriage or if we are moving towards cohabitation outside marriage becoming a substitute. I would also like to know, as a demographer, what are your thoughts on the new Bill 146 in Quebec on the family, and how it can affect the evolution of the number of cohabitations outside marriage?

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

Well the first question you ask on the explanations we can offer to try to understand what happened in the increase of cohabitation, the two reasons you advance do not appear convincing to me. In a way the increase in cohabitation in the 70's was a phenomenon that occurred in most western countries. There was already the sort of behaviour leaning in that direction in the Scandinavian countries where cohabitation outside marriage was a more extensive part of the culture. It became more accentuated in the 70's. In several European countries, this movement followed. In the States, I think we also observe an increase of this lifestyle, therefore, Canada is not exceptional. It appears to me to be difficult to interpret this as being only the result of a bad economical conjuncture. On the other hand, that it be related to a purely demographic phenomenon of differences in generations, this also appears unlikely to be the main cause.

It seems to me that to look at the explanations of Louis Roussel, a French sociologist who recently published a very interesting book but who had also done a lot of work on marriage in the French society. He sees in the Western countries a relatively strong movement towards what he calls a deinstitutionalization of lifestyles. Therefore, everything that is institutional presents constraints, or at least is perceived by the individual as constraints, external to the will of the individuals, loses a lot of its appeal, and he sees in the decrease in legal marriage a movement that is connected to the decrease of importance for the various social institutions. If we want to find an explanation that is more demographically linked, I don't have any certainty in that area but it seems to me that the fact that fertility has decreased so much - that is, the number of children that people want to have, not only the number of children that they want to have but the number that they have, the means to have or to plan, can contribute to lessen the feeling we have that we must make a long term commitment when we form a couple. We want few children and since we want few, the social conditions surrounding us causes that the individuals, even if it is not their wish, can face raising children in the context of a more tentative relationship. All these elements combined cause that marriage which was monogamous marriage, the irreversible marriage, loses some of its appeal. Its function becomes a bit less necessary to assure the survival of the group. Now, it is not certain that we have to this day calmly and clearly faced all the consequences of this weakening of our interpersonal commitments and the commitments we make to our children. We have not faced nor seen the effects on the lives of our children of these choices we make among adults. I come back to the study begun last year by Nicole Marcil - Gratton as part of the Canadian study on the demographic evolution which demonstrates that these phenomena, from the point of view of children, gain importance, and that we are still poorly equipped to measure or to perceive or accept consequences and take the means to organize our society so that the consequences are more on the positive than on the negative side.

There were other questions that you asked?

Question:

Can you comment on the new Bill 146?

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

I would not dare, because it is a Bill I think that is very complex for our Canadian colleagues. I cannot even present to you all the content of this Bill that will redefine marriage and the relationships between men and women in Quebec. I think it would be a bit like launching into an adventure to talk with more detail. I'm sorry, maybe next time.

Question:

I would be interested in your thoughts about what is needed in curriculum development in terms of the school system. What do you see as important for young people - do they need family life education - do they need family studies? Your thoughts please.

Glossop:

The easy question - do they need family life education? One thing that has concerned me in recent years is that I have often perceived, rightly or wrongly, that there has been a weakening of commitment to the kind of softer programs of education within various school systems across the country. I can't comment about any province in particular, but sometimes family life education programs are regarded somewhat as superfluous when you get down to the nitty gritty, nuts and bolts of education. That I find regrettable. Family life education is a profession, a discipline that has advanced tremendously in my opinion in the last 15 years. As many of you know, it basically started as another term for sex education in the schools. Its self definition, its mandate, its understanding of the need to create a context within which the information about human sexuality is presented in a humanly meaningful and a value relevant context, has grown dramatically and tremendously. Therefore, I think it is an important part of the curriculum. I also think that I'm seeing many good developments in curriculum materials and in many text books that have been designed for undergraduate use and high school use. I can give you a reading list of those, but you probably know them as well as I do. One thing happening in those books is, we do see a respect for diversity of family forms and a playing out of all the consequences and implications. I also see that there has been a redefinition of the subject matter that is covered in these books to treat more fairly and properly the concepts of gender and the relationship of roles and responsibilities between men and women. Those concepts have become part of the curriculum and that I think is good. I think I would personally like to see a little bit more attention across other programs, such as history and literature. This may be done, perhaps by the very best teacher, in the very best schools, but I do think there is a danger of seeing family dealt with as, "Let's go over at 4:15 to the family class and we'll do family, and then we'll go back and do something else." Family, as all of you in this room might agree, is an integral part of our lives and we need to understand its importance across the disciplines. So, basically, more would be better.

Question:

Switching from youth to the elderly, we heard the story this morning about the gentlemen who was 105 years old that had to get married. We've also heard the statistics on the great number of older women. As one of those older women and working with a great many elderly people, I find that in Saskatchewan, if there is a widower he is usually snapped up in marriage before his wife is hardly cold in the grave. We still live in a couple oriented society and I'm wondering, do you have any thoughts on how we can remedy this imbalance between so many older women and the very few partners.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

I don't think we have any solution for that. I think that is a very difficult reality to deal with. The differential between the mortality rate of men and women of all ages have remained and increased in this century. I think it's one of the very difficult questions we have to deal with. Women make life more difficult for men and they just have submitted you to more harsh conditions that do not touch us. (laughter) But more seriously, I find the fact that there is a general tendency at all ages for men to marry or to live with younger women when we are all getting older, the fact that the marriage market becomes more and more unfavorable for women since they are more numerous and they have fewer men in front of them to marry, and if there was not that inclination to marry someone younger for men, still the differential in numbers would make it impossible for all older women to marry. Unless we come to a situation where this trend in mortality will be changed, and that will certainly take a long time, I think we will have to change some of our social organizations to allow women to have more interesting lives. But I don't think that women who are older and healthy do not have interesting lives because they are not married. They can have interesting lives but they can suffer isolation. It seems that men who are alone tend to have a harsher life than women who are alone from the statistical view. There is really no solution that I can propose.

Glossop:

Clearly one thing that has been happening, we can't make generalizations but people need to live in a supportive environment with others. There have been some small studies done about the living arrangements of older Canadians and many have decided to live with other people, not necessarily because of love, but simply for companionship and some sense of intimacy. I don't mean physical intimacy, but I mean somebody to share one's life and experiences with. This can be by women living together to men living together as well.

What's happening there is a recognition of a need for support as being part of what makes us healthy. To some extent we still struggle to say that that's okay within our society because we do have this notion of the autonomous financially independent individual. Many young people would say "I would expect my parents to come live with me - I would want to do that," but in fact the reluctance is often on the part of the older people who would say, "No, I would not want to be a burden to my children", the assumption being that they had failed within a frame of reference in our society. They couldn't maintain that independent apartment or that independent living.

Question:

Dr. Glossop, I was touched by your rather impassioned comment about the lack of an epidemic in teen pregnancies and both you and Dr. McDaniels mentioned the larger number of women between 25 and over who have young children. We in our province have a policy which makes it much easier in setting up child care programs for teenagers at schools and so on. It is extremely difficult to find funds to set up child care programs for other ages. What steps can be taken to help policy makers better reflect reality rather than the assumptions we make about our society?

Glossop:

I hope that symposiums like this help. I hope that a better knowledge base and better dissemination of information we have will help. I do want to add one thing given she's brought me back to adolescent pregnancies. Although I was discounting suggestions that we have an epidemic, I was not by any means wishing to diminish the profound and difficult circumstances of those young women and their children. Indeed, the vast majority of those young women now keep their children and raise them. It is a very difficult life. They need to be supported. One of the most crucial needs I think is to provide them with adequate opportunities to continue their education. Otherwise there it becomes, unfortunately, a bad prognosis. I certainly think that in order to try to reduce the incidence, obviously more knowledge and information is necessary, but there is also another problem. Knowledge about homosexuality is somewhat abstract. The problem is that our kids often live in a somewhat artificial environment for many years. It's like having taken them out of the mines in the 19th century, we invented compulsory schooling because we didn't know what else to do with them, so we hide them away for many, many years and that period of dependency gets longer and longer. Now what happens is that the consequences of their actions perhaps are not so immediate and evident.

Their opportunities to exercise responsibility are diminished, I think, in our culture. Consequently, one of the things we need to do is to provide an experiential basis in which young women and young men can begin to appropriate that knowledge of what human sexuality is and take it in as meaningful to themselves and their own experience. I think that's where the disjuncture is at this point. It is not just sexual information that is necessary, I think it's in the nature of the experience that we provide to our young people. That has a lot to do with other sessions at this conference, about television, communicating, parenting and a variety of other issues. I would like to think that I have seen a more realistic understanding of families evolved in the last 15 years, which is the number of years I have devoted to trying to understand what is happening to families.

I think we just have to keep working to make sure that the policies and programs that we introduce are responsive to the realities and not to the best wishes that we would have.

Question:

Is it not important to think not of unique, small groups, but more globally in that the teenage pregnancies result in a child, and caring for that individual doesn't stop when they leave school either. It must carry on, and so we need to look at the whole spectrum?

Moderator:

We recently did a study in Manitoba, called the Women's Initiative, in which we had an extensive consultation process. One of the areas identified was, again not wanting to identify another crisis, children having children. One of the points made repeatedly was the need for the longevity of support. That is, not simply when they are in school, by making sure they get child care, but they also get support in learning parenting skills.

Question:

I hope the theory you have about school curriculum isn't well founded. Implementation always takes some time, and one of the strengths of the school system may well be its stability. The fear I have is the one you alluded to when you talk about the increasing fragility of the relationship in which children are growing up, and the impact that has on the school. The dilemma is who takes ownership in that situation because the school will and does, if no-one else does. The dilemma is that if the school becomes the institution on which everything is dumped, it is bound to eventually become unsuccessful.

The question is if that's not an acceptable way of addressing children, how are we going to plan to address their needs in a way which is more cooperative, so that all institutions have an ownership so success and failure is shared.

Glossop:

First of all, I appreciate your correction or suggestion with regard to my overly rash comments about curriculum guidelines and development. I take it as a fair comment. To respond to your last question, or observation, I was really pleased when you ended your comment to talk about a notion you shared, collective ownership or responsibility, because you moved to that from your initial comment which was who is going to take ownership. That's one of the dilemmas we are trying to get over right now - who has responsibility in these matters. And what I would try to argue, it is indeed a shared responsibility that we cannot as a society survive very well or for very long if we continue with the often taken for granted assumption that, well, they are their kids, their responsibility, they had them. If we were to organize our society on that basis we would be really quite unique. No other society has ever pulled it off as far as I know. Very few societies ever said to two adults, or one adult, you are responsible for the care and nurturing of the next generation as isolated individuals. There was always in some sense a collective responsibility. I think what we have to do now is redefine the players in that game and how we will share among our formalized institutions including the schools, including particularly, I think, the workplace and recent efforts to talk about the circumstances and needs of workers with family responsibilities. What's really being talked about is employees with family responsibilities, are encouraging in that we are beginning to see that because families are not only important to us as individuals but to the society. Therefore, a variety of societal institutions or agents, or players, are involved in assuring that adequate support and recognition is provided to families. I wouldn't want to jockey back and forth and say it belongs to the school, or to the home entirely.

Participant: The observation I would make is that in the absence of other planning, the school will increasingly be taking on ownership and I wonder if there is a planning mechanism we can engage which will avoid that. Not that the school may not be the best physical place for it to occur, but I think the ownership, as you say, needs to be shared. What is the planning mechanism to get this?

Glossop:

I forgot to share my concerns with you about how we can tend to overload schools and teachers with all these responsibilities. One thing that I think the education system has gotten a rough ride on is the notion of illiteracy.

I'm not sure that traditionally schools were ever fully responsible for the literacy of the population. It seems to me that schools have a great potential to build upon some sense of literacy that children used to bring to school. Without that, which grew largely from the nature of parent/child involvement,it is very difficult for schools to magically turn them into literate citizens. I don't think schools should be blamed for this as they often are for high rates of illiteracy. One example of how I don't think we can lay everything at the foot of the educational institutions, or the teachers who work in them.

__Question__:

I had occasion most recently to spend some time with classroom teachers discussing the changes that had taken place in the classroom over the last 20 years and one of the things that struck me, and I wonder whether Dr. Glossop might comment on, was when they were looking at the role of the family, vis a vis the socialization of children, teachers were feeling quite burdened that more of that responsibility was coming their way. I'm wondering in light of that function that we seem to agree that families have, why do we have in our country today so much discussion about intolerance, racism, sexism? One of the things that a grade 4 teacher said to me in this discussion was that she watched her students sometimes for as long as an hour and a half, to see one genuine act of kindness being shown from one child to another in the classroom. I'm wondering whether families have either yielded their responsibility with respect to imparting values having to do with tolerance, or whether they look at television, and all the other forces that are around out there that influence children and say, "We can't compete", and they give up and expect the schools to take it on. I would really like, in light of so much discussion lately about racism in our society, to have some comments on that. Had Dr. Herberg been here, we would have had an opportunity to explore that particular role of families in imparting those kinds of views.

__Glossop__:

You ask have families yielded their responsibilities - I am troubled because families are blamed for an awful lot, and to some extent my job is to defend them as well as to understand them. Families are tired in my opinion. Family members are exhausted. They share their tiredness more than their liveliness, and they live on the leftovers of human energy. I'm not surprised when I get home at 5 or 6 at night and quite frankly, it's easier to turn on the t.v. to babysit the kids than it is to engage in that good family interaction where we both learn how to cook meals together. In other words, I am exhausted. I think many other family members are exhausted. It is difficult therefore to martial the energy to assume those responsibilities as fully as we would like.

One of the reasons for that is if we look at it ourselves as individuals, we no longer spend 42 or 44 hours a week in the labour force - we've got it down to 37 on average for the regular working week. But as families we are now devoting about 65 or 70 hours a week to the labour force in order to maintain the same level of purchasing power that families had 25 years ago with a lesser commitment of time and the family's resources of energy into the labour market. I'm not saying that is something we want to reverse, but if you use family as a grouping in the analytic concept, then you find out they are devoting a lot more energy into the labour market and, therefore, possibly are tired. Time spent together is vitally important to families. It is in that time spent together that the change that is built into the fabric of family life that Susan McDaniel was talking about, is located. Quite frankly, I think we don't have much time together. Also, the time we do have together, we may not want to use together and we quickly find individualistic escapes. So not only do we escape into the family from the public world, but we then try to escape from the family and we go to our computers, to play golf, squash, we go to participact as individuals - not together. We tend to segregate ourselves by age groups and by sex.

There also is the question of what we fill our time with and television is one example. Quite frankly, I'm not all that concerned about the content of television. I know there is too much sex, violence and I'll agree with all of that research, but what I'm worried about most is what is happening within families when we are watching television. The arguments as well as the quality time spent together impacts on how children learn what it is to be kind, to be responsible for the well being of others. That may have something to do with the intolerance you see among children. But I don't want to lay responsibility on the kids either. Sex, drugs and rock and roll are what our kids turn to, but we as adults turn to incredible consumerism. Our motives are not always pure and we have our own outlets. It is characteristic of our culture, not just of our kids. Because time is short in families, we now try to use the same kind of time management techniques in our families that we use in our office place. Our refrigerators have all these magnets with reminders, pick up the kids, appointments. Family experts tell us to schedule meetings with our kids and to write them memos. Texaco sent me an advertisement of a little tape recorder which you stick on your fridge with a magnet so that you can leave as they say "clearly recorded messages for your family members". When I get an answering machine on the other end of the phone, I feel strange and alienated. Now this is a machine that is inviting me to feel exactly the same way about my kids and my wife. I know why we have to do this, but I'm not sure that it is an indictment of our culture if that's the way we are forced to interact.

Question:

Dr. Glossop, I would like direct your attention to a group that at least where I come from is perceived as having a very positive and quite successful family oriented culture, and these are Asian families. I've been working in the family court system in Burnaby for the past 15 years. In that time, the community of Burnaby has experienced, as the rest of the mainland, a significant increase in families of Asian origin. Yet in that period of time we have experienced nowhere near that sort of increase in the clientele we are seeing. I get the impression from talking to people in other social service agencies that is also the case there. I also get the impression from talking to colleagues and friends in education that children from these families are doing extremely well in the education system from the earliest years right up to university and post university. They are very highly represented, out of proportion one might say to their numbers in terms of very successful students.

Can any of the panel members enlighten me as to whether what we are seeing is real or apparent. Do you have any data on whether the values Asian families bring with them survive transition to our culture here and also, given that we will be depending more and more in the future on immigration from these countries to make up for our population gap. What possible impact on our own family values will come from these countries?

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

A society like Canada has been changed by the coming of people who were different from one another and we are arriving in a period where we will see even more of people coming from different cultures. We will have to draw from their experience in order to make our social environment liveable and correct some of the trends we have been taking that maybe seem to go in the wrong direction. I don't know about all the various values that support the Asian family system, or the Latin-American family system, so I suppose it is difficult for us to see how the cultures can be taken into our system and worked within our present social organization. To a certain degree, I believe they will probably be more changed by ours than we will by theirs because the United States is beside us. I think that one of the strongest attractions that we have to fight against, or that we are lucky to follow, is that the American way of life is getting more and more important in the western world, People will come to live with us and share our territory, and social organizations will probably in the end mix in that very general trend. Hopefully, some of the positive features they have will stay with them and maybe will inspire and influence us. As a society, we certainly need to examine more carefully than we have done in the past, or more objectively, some of the consequences of the trends that we have been following recently.

I was talking about that in terms of cohabitation, in terms of the breaking up of the family, what it does to the way our children are raised, what influence it has on their development. We will have to look at these realities since they are spreading much more closely and it seems to me that we are becoming conscious of the consequences. That we will have to reorganize to make our society just for everyone, and liveable for everyone, especially for the children.

Glossop:

Over the long term we are likely to see more changes in our ways of life, and we are likely to learn from and become like those who will join us. There is in Dr. Herberg's paper a typology which talks about the degree of commitment to close association in ethnic groups to their extended families and the network of support extended families represent, and I do recommend Dr. Herberg's paper to you. I cannot answer your question as to whether or not there are fewer problems or whether or not the problems simply are not brought to your attention. I would suggest there is a tremendous social utility to ethnic group cohesion for the first couple of generations. Basically, it is a survival strategy and there may be something we can learn about that, because it seems to me that what is happening is we are increasingly becoming more interdependent upon one another, whereas we have fooled ourselves in the past to thinking that we can make it on our own. It seems to me that men have now got the opportunity to recognize that they have always been dependent on their wives, but it's just more visible now, just as women have always been dependent upon their husbands, and children and other generations equally. We may come to realize that we do need each other again, and that may be what we can learn from our other Canadians.

Moderator:

We are looking at an increased number of older women, we're looking at very distinct changes in the institution of the family, we're looking at children who have an increased likelihood of living as single parents although there is some concern about using the term crisis. That we may be facing a crisis in caring. There is definitely change in roles of the individual family, and the individuals in families, and that there are changes in policy and that we have to be looking at the effect of all the individuals on policies. I think those are things for us to go away remembering, and I would like to thank you Ms. LaPierre-Adamcyk and Dr. Glossop for enlightening us.

Question:

Do you know of anybody who instead of working on poverty levels is working on a, what would you call it, a more elevated concept of developing some social standards for the society?

Glossop:

First of all, let me say that Evelyne knows a great deal and I know something, but there are people in this audience who can also answer these questions, and I would hope that this not become necessarily directed one way.

There are indeed people who have been trying to develop standards, child care perhaps being the best example. I heard Garbarino talking about the state or the government in some way trying to have some direct relationship to ensuring that there was a collective, a representation of collective will, in order to ensure the quality upbringing and best interests of children. In Canada, I haven't seen that intention worked on very much. The only time I've ever seen it actually is when occasionally judges will in their written statements sometimes talk about, "Wouldn't it be nice if we had to licence parents." Or, wouldn't it be a good idea if we had compulsory mediation, or made all sorts of obligations contingent upon the provision of services. Those expressions I sometimes find questionable, quite frankly.

Question:

I'm not talking in that direction at all. I'm talking about a standard for, let's say the City of Regina says, "Let's set a standard for how our kids can live in the city."

Glossop:

I think we're not yet at the healthy cities development mentality being wide-spread, but I know that there are a number of people working on it in their own communities. That actually might be somebody you might want to get in touch with is the Healthy Cities Project. It's funded by Health and Welfare Canada. Cities are invited to participate in what is called a Healthy Cities Project. They have to take into account a variety of environmental and ecological factors. Let me give you one concrete example of how important I think this kind of work is. Statistics about which kids get neglected point out that those kids from lower socio-economic categories get neglected. The way they collect some of these statistics is to count the number of emergency ward injuries. What they found out in some studies is that if you change the regulations pertaining to parking in lower class neighbourhoods, fewer kids ran out into the street and fewer kids got hit by cars. You'd have to be stretching it to say that accidents were the result of parental neglect or because the parents didn't care. It had as much to do with whether or not we let people park their cars in the places where children are likely to be.

So, I think that in trying to put the interests, trying to see the world through the needs and interests of children and family members is important, but I think we're in the infancy of seeing any real policy development in that direction. There may be others who have more knowledge.

Moderator:

Evelyne, I think you wanted to add something?

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

It seems to me that you could maybe find some helpful information about the questions you are raising by reading some writings related to family policies. I think that in Quebec we have probably done more work in that direction than the other provinces since there were, as Mr. Champagne was mentioning yesterday, a number of consultations with municipal groups; finally all segments of society were involved. There are certainly archives that could be reviewed for the documentation that resulted. There were reports that were distributed at large. I think they are accessible and would allow you at least to see the type of suggestions that were made, not that we have implemented them at home yet but at least we have, I think, some elements that could help you to pursue your thinking. However, there are certainly also things in literature of the same type that would come from European countries who have already developed more advanced family policies than we have. I am thinking of France, Austria and even the countries of the East for instance, who have put in place services for children of all ages, and you could find there some content to add to your consideration.

Question:

I have two questions. Are there any statistics on what type of families our politicians represent? I have a distinct impression that most male politicians represent one-income families and most female politicians represent either no families in the traditional sense or certainly no children, and I wonder if, you know, if this doesn't colour the way at which they look at the problems of the rest of society. The other question. I have not heard anyone in any way shape or form address the problems of distances and families, and are there any statistics or are there any studies on the fact that aging people are facing the fact that their families, their children, are not near them?

Moderator:

The question is interesting, the latter part particularly. In preparing for this session we talked about distances in our own experience. Very interesting question. I want you to know that neither of these presenters are civil servants so they can answer your question on politicians.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

In regards to the first question on the family history of politicians, actually I don't really have information on this. I can imagine, just like you are assuming, that actually women who have a career in politics represent a family group different from that of the men, but really I don't have any documentation on this. However, in regards to the question that deals with the elderly, the distance they have in relation to their children, the traditional statistics coming from a census never allow to distinguish or to appreciate, to measure the distances that separate families. We gather our information by household, i.e. the people who inhabit the same dwelling, and we do not have information on the contacts they have with people who live elsewhere. There are, however, recent surveys that suggest this even if they don't actually contain this information at this time, there is the general social survey done by Statistics Canada. There was one that dealt with the issue of the elderly. I know that this survey is available and I think that there were all kinds of information on the type of support that the elderly get from their children, from their friends, from their relatives. I don't know whether the questions of distance were addressed directly, I don't know the survey in detail but certainly we have more information there then we ever had from traditional sources. This is at least one fairly important source of information on the support network that can surround the elderly.

Glossop:

I can't, even if Doris May says I can, I can't tell you about the family lives of politicians. There may have been research commissioned by an advisory council on the status of women, or other women's groups. I'd like to see the findings if you ever dig it up - I'd really appreciate seeing a set. Some of my conversations over the years with various politicians would lead me to believe that the suggestion I think you were making is indeed true, that they are not as a group representative of the diversity of Canadian family forms.

The question about geographical mobility, or that's the way I will interpret your question.

We have, I think, been convinced that a long distance phone call is the next best thing to being there, and I'm not yet convinced that we can really provide very much real tangible, real emotional or financial support, material support, to our families over Ma Bell. I would use this as an example of the unintended policy consequence of economic policies that are not intended to have a tremendous impact or influence on how families carry out their work on behalf of their members and on behalf of society. But I will tell you that, and these are somewhat dated figures but I don't think it's changed dramatically. The rates of geographical mobility of the Canadian labour force are among the highest in the industrialized world. It has something to do with the kind of economy and staples-based economy that we have. Fifty percent of Canadians used to move once every five years and I expect that it hasn't changed all that dramatically. Half of those people moved from one neighbourhood to another neighbourhood, the other half moved from one city to another city or one province to another province. Those are high rates of mobility. Even the moves in the city do a lot to jeopardize vitality and sustainability, if you like, of community and neighbourhood networks of support. It's a rather typical pattern - you get the first time homeowner's house, and then you have a kid, and you move into the suburbs, and then you move back in, so that there is this mobility within our cities as well which isn't necessarily great for the stability of our communities, especially once again when governments sometimes will say, "Well, communities are going to have to do more." Well my question is where are the communities once you've moved everybody around once every five years? Further to what Evelyne said, the next cycle of what is called the general social survey within Stats Can is going to be focused on family. One of the emphases will be on family relationships, extended family relationships, not just within the household, but beyond. That will be launched in 1990, and you can ask the people at the Stats Can desk when you can anticipate seeing the results of it. It might be a little while, but it has been a topic that has at least been identified and accorded significance in the sense that people have said, "This is important enough for us to count now, and to see what kinds of contacts there are intergenerationally between households, not just within them."

__Question__:

My concern with social statistics is, for most common people who aren't academics or professional, the source of statistics on family problems or family strengths is the local newspaper or the morning commentary. One of the problems with this source is it's not scientific. The presentation of these statistics are more geared to filling the back paper or a five minute time clock. What is the effect on the national psyche of non-scientific statistics on the family problem? Is it a major problem?

Glossop:

I appreciate the comment tremendously. It is a major problem. I think until we as a society, kind of in the same fashion that Jim Garbarino was talking about, are willing to accord more significance to family matters generally, family problems, just general family facts and figures, we're not going to get good information. The quality, or I should say as you've said, the lack of quality of the information that's available to us, outside of the academic journals and the agency publications and things which are quite high quality, but also usually incomprehensible to most people, is really very poor and damaging to what I would call the discourse around families. It does not help, it does not advance the interests of those who want to work with and on behalf of families. I don't want to be blaming here. I also find though that people who collect statistics, the people who are very credible and do very good work, are also either reluctant to or are confined by their employment to comment about the significance of these statistics. Quite frequently, I'll sit in my office in Ottawa and some government agency will release a new report and it will be filled with really good substantiated, interesting information about families that really should get a wide hearing. And they'll release the report and then the press will spend three hours phoning that government department asking, "What does it mean?" And they won't be able to find anybody who is permitted to or can try to decipher it. So I get this phone call and because I'm not a statistician or a demographer and I am crazy enough to speculate and interpret, people say do you know what it means? And you know, I give it my best shot, which may be a reason why the quality of the stuff that you see is so poor.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

I find that this question is a very important one because even when you present statistical results, having the impression you are respecting the scientific norms, I think that you pass a certain number of messages. If you say one marriage out of three is going to end in divorce, you insist on the aspect marriage is something that can be broken. If you say that two marriages out of three are stable you carry a sort of different message. And you know even here in this symposium, I was sort of very surprised to hear a few times that the family is a very dangerous place to live, because of the rate of people being killed by family members. I think that to say that family is a dangerous place to live does not really correspond to the reality. It seems to me that the family is probably the safest place and, unfortunately, there are incidents, too often of violence. But to use these statistical figures is not really to carry the real realities of our family. So even if you use statistical figures, and if you try to measure things, you do not necessarily carry the best image of the reality itself.

So I guess we all have to be very careful in using the scientific results and the statistical figures that we are working with.

Question:

This question that has been raised is so dear to my heart. I appreciate the answers that have been given, but I think the problem is even deeper than that. It is basically an incapacity, I think, on the part of journalists and researchers to talk with each other. And I would locate the problem at both ends. As far as the problem with the mass media is concerned, I think there's a false construction as to what constitutes news. So that when a report is released it's loose. Once it has been reported by one or two papers, it's no longer news. That research was probably in the making for something like three or four years. It deals with data which are by definition always a few years old, because that's how long it takes to do it. And to artificially construct a definition of news on long term research is an utter misunderstanding of what research is all about. Now looking at the other side, the researchers, I think we are often incapable of looking at the wider implications of the type of consequences of what we have been doing and are unable to put it in a language that is in fact understandable to non-experts, which then results in distorted summaries because by definition the news media are under restrictions that researchers don't have. And if we do not give them capsule versions which is all they can present, we leave it to them and they are often not up to what we would like to see. But I do think the solution to that problem is train both sides to talk with each other.

Moderator:

Thank you for adding that. I'm often involved in gender specific language and trying to get people to use gender specific language. Maybe we should have another language training course on how to use stats.

Question:

As a parent and a grandparent, I happen to believe that the traditional family is where it's at, and that has been alluded to by many of the speakers, although we also recognize the reality of our times in that there are other combinations of individuals who are regarded as a family and who make up family units. But one thing that I'm wondering about is when the recommendations go forward from this symposium, whether there will be any kind of emphasis placed on promoting what we feel is the best family unit, and that is the traditional family.

And also, whether it would be considered desirable in government policies and educational policies, if we're going to teach our children anything in the high schools about family life and have family life courses, whether the traditional family would be held up as the model, or whether it would be just set on the shelf along with all the other arrangements as an option to pick and choose from according to the values that you pick up on T.V. or where ever else you may get them. I think we can either drift or we can try and steer the ship, and I'm just wondering how you feel about that as the experts here and possibly others?

Glossop:

Two comments in preface. First of all, I respect your personal convictions. I don't necessarily share them, but I certainly respect them. Also the question really isn't whether or not the experts agree, that's something you will take tomorrow to your workshops and it's really among you that you will have to decide whether or not you wish to make recommendations as to any particular preferred kind of family. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I would presume that when you say traditional family what you have in mind is the single wage earning family in which there are two generations, the woman who stays at home to raise the children and the man who earns money in the labour force, and their children. Is that what you mean by the traditional family?

Participant:

No, I simply meant the institution of marriage is a life long thing as opposed to here today gone tomorrow. Oh, lets back up then, good, because what I was going to go on about was how in fact there never really has been a tradition. There is not really a traditional family. Let me continue my first train of thought, then I will try to come back to yours. The single wage earning nuclear family of mother, father and children, and with only one wage earner, is really not a very long tradition. In my opinion, it could not have lasted for more than about 50 to 75 years in a very particular period of industrial societies. Women have traditionally been very active and they've always been active, it's just how we perceive their activity and their involvement in the production of material wealth resources and security for family members. And therefore, the era of the 1950's and early 1960's is really not a terribly useful touch stone with which to compare and evaluate and assess all other kinds of family forms. That being said, let me now come back to what I think you have clarified for me, which is your commitment to marriage. Marriage and family are in my opinion different events, they are different phenomenon. Marriages can be dissolved. Family obligations and commitments cannot. When one bears a child, and assumes responsibility for the member of another generation, that is a commitment that is lifelong and there is permanence to it.

And one should respect those commitments and obligations more than we manage to do, I think, in our present circumstances. At the same time I would suggest to you that most Canadians, and I share this value myself personally, most Canadians do when they enter marriage expect to be there only once, expect it to be lifelong. That is their aspiration, that is their value, that is their commitment. What I think is of interest to us and the direction of our recommendations is how can we make our social and our economic, cultural environment such that it is easier for people to sustain the commitments that they enter into over time. And what is it about our present circumstances that make it difficult. Because I don't really think the people yet have moved to the mentality of, "Hey, let's get married, I'll discard it three years down the road when I'm no longer happy with it." I think there are a variety of very important reasons that make it difficult to sustain our relationships, and that's where I personally see a usefulness in focusing recommendations.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

I am not sure that I can add a lot to what Dr. Glossop just said. I think that the presentation I made this morning, particularly the part of that presentation on the consequences of the adults' decisions on the children, totally go in the same direction as Dr. Glossop said from the point of view of the responsibility of the commitment made by the adults towards the children. I think that we can only hope that the traditional aspects of our family system will be preserved. From the point of view of the adults' lives, we can certainly be more flexible and think of arrangements that will permit maximum fulfilment of people. But when that goal conflicts with the children's best interests, I think that the thinking must deepen and self-searching must take place. For example, it seems even though we do not have results from research, the multiplying of family situations in the course of birth to adolescence, must cause children demands and constraints that are certainly considerable. For instance, to have to adjust to the arrival of a spouse in the family, to have to adjust to this new spouse bringing his/her own children, thus creating a new family context, and that there be another split. We can believe that it presents a context that is difficult for youth at a time when they are in the process of maturation. I think that on this we are at a loss, but we have not found in our thinking, in our social consciousness, a way of regaining this sense of long-term commitment on behalf of the children.

Question:

I want to pick up on something that Bob mentioned earlier, and that is the importance of strengthening the community infrastructure that strengthens families, and of course child care, aging families, and families in crisis, and so on, are all part of that whole dynamic. I want each of the panellists, and perhaps other people as well, to comment on my feeling that in reality the ability of communities to provide a strong infrastructure is really hampered by the federal/provincial jurisdictional issues and many, many other related political issues of that sort. Which means that we continue to have a very piece-meal approach in almost every community in Canada to our support to families. And what's your wish list, I guess, if we could change it.

Glossop:

You've painted the situation well. The federal/provincial dilemmas in trying to put together a coherent set of systems to provide for children or for other members of the community, or to support families in general, raises a number of very tricky issues. Certainly with regard to child care, I want to see the establishment of at least minimal standards across the country that parents can feel safe and secure, and know that their children are being cared for well. But that's not to say that I want to see absolutely the same thing in every province by any means. We need to preserve the opportunity for communities to cater to their own specific needs while, at the same time, ensuring that there is a common understanding within our society and our culture that these needs are important and must be met in particular ways.

The wish list is very long, it comes out of all the workshop questions. I want to see the relationship between family life and employment change. I want to see the income security needs of the families met better, especially those at the bottom end. I want to see the services that we provide to families more integrated and coherent. I think underneath all of that, what I want to see is a reaffirmation of the commitment of Canadians that would say that we as a culture and a society are responsible collectively for the well being of our children and for the support of our families. And quite frankly, I have seen that commitment being eroded in the recent past.

Participant:

Maybe that's the one area of common ground among all of us as well.

Glossop:

We are the first culture that I know of that has basically said, "You have the kids, they are your kids, you raise them." Every other culture that I'm familiar with, in other societies and other times, has provided some sort of collective support for the nurturing of the next generation. Because those societies have recognized how dependent they are on the next generation and therefore are dependent upon the quality of the nurturing and care that we give to them. I want to see us get away from the sense that children and old people are simply the responsibility of those directly involved. That disturbs me immensely, and if you want then, I will take a look at a variety of government policies. I'm most familiar with federal government policies, but quite frankly, recent budgets and tax reform has not been all that acknowledging of the work that families do for the society.

Question:

I was intrigued by your demographics in terms of the future generations and nature of the work force. I'm wondering if in fact those very demographics don't suggest some sort of golden age whereby kids today may be able to live out their values at work. Work will have to change to accommodate them simply because there are so few of them and they are so highly skilled that they will be able to suggest, to demand in fact, work change its form in order to better accommodate the values they have.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

I don't know if social evolution will actually follow some of the data that we suggest and which inspire you. If we look at the recent past, we have seen the decrease in the number of children who were to enter the schools. We have observed this over the years, starting in 1965, until now. It was initially the elementary school that was affected, each year the group of children entering school was smaller. We could have imagined that spontaneously we could have reallocated resources to, for instance, improve considerably the finality of education and the services we were to offer our children. It is not at all certain that the decisions that were made to reorganize the resources benefitted primarily the children. We could have thought that, in view of the evolution of women entering the labour force, that we would organize services where responsibility for the children would be assumed by the schools, by the school environment, maybe not by the professors, by the teachers, but by the school context, where they spend their day and not be put on the street at 3:00 p.m. when the two parents are at work. I think that we are far in our society from admitting that for children of elementary school age, we need services to replace the presence of the mother in the home.

This is one element. I imagine that for other elements, the adjustments that we need to make, we do not foresee, it seems. We have difficulty finding principles that will be based on an improvement of the quality of life, rather than on the allocation of resources on other things that would seem less helpful and less fundamental than to care for our children and give them a more satisfying environment. As the time where the young workers will be less numerous, they may be able to demand a number of things. Will they do it if we don't collectively reflect on what would be desirable for them to ask? Maybe they will base their demands on issues totally different from family values. I think we need to reinforce these values if we want them to be present in their requests eventually.

Glossop:

The two observations raised very big sets of questions. Demographic change - let me just say that in my opinion demographic change does pose a variety of challenges to us, and I hope you won't be upset with me if I also say that demographic change provides very little solutions. There is in fact a tendency to think that change is demographically driven. You just sit by and let it happen, watch it, etc. My opinion is if we are going to accommodate to the demographic change, we cannot escape from the personal responsibility and the political responsibility, to really set in motion some fairly fundamental shifts. The demographic changes are not that profound that we face - other countries have already faced them in terms of dependency ratios. But if we are to face them and live through them comfortably, it means tremendous shifts. We've got about a 15-20 year period in which to prepare. Unfortunately, we don't often use those kinds of advance warning periods all that well and effectively. That's all I'll say on demographic change. About changes to work, I have seen slight indications that indeed the relationship between family and work is being reassessed, reevaluated, and there are a number of good kinds of examples where I think things are happening. But I'm still worried about progress, the rate of change, which is incredibly slow. And I am still always struck by a sentence in the Quebec government "Green Paper" on family policy, of which Chartrand was one of the principal authors, in which he said, "It is about time for modern society to take individuals just as seriously in their roles as family members as we have tended to take them in their roles as employees." And until we are willing to do that, and follow all that implies, I am not sure that I'm all that optimistic that we are going to be able to redefine work in such a way. People are going to be able to adjust their lives and to coordinate their lives as workers and family members.

Question:

I'm not taking anyone to task but just commenting on some of the things I observed. We are as a society getting older but I think the characteristics of older people are also changing. They are healthier, more able to be productive, and I think we should stop talking about them as burdens. I don't want to be considered a burden in 15 years because I'm going to get old age pension. We may not want to go in to work 9-5 every day 5 days a week for all of our lives, but we can be productive. The other thing Dr. Glossop mentioned that concerned me was the kind of statement about what the expectations of young people are, how conservative they are in many ways and so on. I don't have too much quarrel perhaps with some of the values of that, but I'm wondering how realistic they are. In the demographics we saw of our own century, we saw how global events - unwanted, unexpected perhaps, determine the shape of our demographics. I think there are global events going to affect the 21st century every bit as profound, powerful and critical as those in the 20th century. Most of them will probably not be things as antiquated as wars but there will be tremendous ecological upheavals which will influence our demographics. Nations that existed as nations today may end up under oceans within the next 20 years, certainly the next 50 years, and all kinds of things like that which will put demand on this country as a receiver of immigration. It's too bad we haven't had a little more discussion about that.

Glossop:

I have no issue with anything you have said. The notion of dependency is actually a very troublesome one to me now. I think its very troublesome for our society. To suggest that all old people are dependent really is not the case. To suggest that children have no real contribution to make to our society is not the case either. I'm worried about the extent to which anybody who does not have a permanent attachment to the labour force is marginalized. I think that may be where I want to see some change over time in terms of the redefinition. Of not only work, but redefinition of work, employment and our relationships and how those fit together. I apologize if we seem to talk about the future and to basically give you a portrait of what happened 15 years ago. That often happens. But I think the way you were leading was dead on.

Lapierre-Adamcyk:

I have colleagues who have been concerned with exactly the questions that you are raising. The future roles will not be what the present roles are, primarily because they are different. The adults today are very different from the adults of yesterday and there are papers published through the demographic study, sponsored by Health and Welfare. If you have access to that literature you would see that these thoughts are shared by people who are doing demographic studies.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Panellists: Dr. Lyle Larson
Joan Glode
Gaston Gauthier

Questions:

What shape will the communities be in the next decade?

How can schools and churches be more effective centres of family and community empowerment?

Larson:

Research in trends in family patterns reflect a not so bright future for family. Marital relationships are on the decline. But this has focused positive trends and attention to these problems in relationships. Preventive activity is essential to enhance family activity.

Schools need to take more seriously the training of teachers in recognizing the symptomatology of needy children. Training in child development is necessary. Involvement of parents in the school in a much more active way is needed. Churches can educate families as this is where families show up together as a unit.

Question:

What strategies work to involve parents? How do we reach those who need it, and reach the Native people?

Gauthier/Glode/Larson:

Less needy parents get involved in the first couple of years. There is no secret to involving needy families. One strategy is to ask the needy parents for their help. They have something to offer to other needy parents. The program must not judge parents as bad or abusive. Parents can be seen as helpful people in the research of the solution. In the native community, be open and honest and practical, and not make a "one-shot" effort, as this will only introduce yourself to the native community. There are two kinds of parents who do not want to be asked to become involved-those who feel unworthy to give answers and those who are apathetic.

These people must be asked and must be affirmed and valued for the struggle that they have gone through in child-rearing responsibilities. Good family programs have had slow and small starts that gain interest as they go along.

Question:

Home and school associations used to be strong, but are disappearing, as in the community of Melfort. How can we get parents involved through the schools in issues that are not of a crisis nature?

Larson:

Participation of parents in family matters needs to arise from the grassroots, and be encouraged and affirmed. Government policies can encourage this process.

Questions:

Are there more complex family issues to deal with today, or are they just different?

Are we searching for a standard in parenting skills, and will it, if achieved, be applicable in such a complex society?

Gauthier/Larson:

There are more problems in our society today and the problems are profoundly different. Ordinary people want: (a) meaning in life and (b) satisfaction in living and it is our responsibility to help provide this.

Yes, there is a standard. Giving values to a young child is worthwhile. The values of health and well-being for families should shape programs, policy, and attitudes.

Question:

How do you measure and quantify prevention; how do you demonstrate effectiveness of programs that have not taken place, in order to justify funding?

Larson/Gauthier:

In the prevention domain, it could not be done. Example S.T.E.P. - Research that follows this shows that parents like it, but does not show that they have put it into actual practice. Research increasingly shows that it is effective, but the research takes more time.

Evaluation can be done. A scholar (research) can sought and follow-up surveys can be done, and a statistical study provided from the data. We, too, need to evaluate our work and follow through with studies. Greatest approval for the S.T.E.P. program came from parents who took it five years ago, and now could apply some of the gained knowledge in their raising of teenagers. A positive sign of a program's worth would be positive recognition by a community leader or by a university.

Question:

Are governments "opting-out" by assuming that employers will take some responsibility for "family life" and providing benefits such as day care and parenting programs for the people?

Glode/Gauthier/Larson:

There are no day care resources on the reserves in Nova Scotia. There is no expectations to have governments provide this service, as money previously allocated for this was out. We need to say to governments and the business community that families are positive contributors to the economic development of the society. Families need to receive from governments a proportionate input to what the families have given towards the building of the community.

Question:

What are the forces in society that prevent implementation of recommendations regarding family policies?

Larson:

(1) Actions cost money, and are financed by government.

(2) To enact anything requires political will, as it will be met with disagreement.

(3) Government's agendas change when elected.

(4) Leadership is required.

Question:

Why does Gaston Gauthier accept ten years as a time framework for implementation of family policy through the community?

Gauthier:

Ten years refers to the formalization of the system, but as for implementation that begins immediately. Family programs such as adult education have far reaching effects in acquainting more and more people with the benefits of good family policy.

Question:

What is the rationale for the recommendation by Dr. Larson for guidance counsellors at the elementary school level.

Larson:

We cannot keep up with the need for counselling in our world. The only answer is prevention. It is the little children and their families that are raising the problems of tomorrow. We need to detect and identify these needy families. These parents are more amenable to parenting education and intervention at this early stage of their child's education than they are later.

Question:

Dr. Larson suggests the school and the church should be the focus for community family relations. Given the sex scandals in the Ottawa schools (reported in Globe and Mail, July 13, 1989) and the child care facilities run by Roman Catholic priests in Newfoundland, how can these be presented as role models?

Larson:

Schools and churches, on the whole are good. These institutions are central in our lives in the local community. While headlines of this nature raise concerns, these community facilities do possess expertise and talent within them to promote family well-being.

Question:

Mrs. Glode quoted that reporting of disclosure of sexual abuse in families was 75%; 75% of what?

Glode:

People who are going, in Nova Scotia, through the rehabilitation (centres) for drug and alcohol treatment. Last year, 75% of those people reported being victims of sexual abuse.

Question:

Legislation in British Columbia does not support families. Education is moving to keep parents away from schools. When parent's advice is asked for, it is often ignored. "Community values" or "multiculturalism" often prevent family opinion from being heard, as there is concern about who might be offended by what is said. "Community values" is an excuse for not really listening to anybody, particularly not families. Can you comment on this conflict?

Gauthier:

Schools are made for children and youth. They are formal institutions not made for parents. We need to redefine the place of parents. It should not be taking over the role of teacher. Parents need to be auxiliaries to the teachers, raising family concerns in the manner of "educators" and not teachers, and not meddle with the school.

In regards to the conflict between interest groups and families, they should co-operate together.

Question:

We hear that we need to teach cultural values to native children in white foster homes. Do you have any way that the natives will go and teach these children in Nova Scotia?

Glode:

Nova Scotia is a small province with a small native population which lends itself to easier accessibility. There are only 55 native children in the custody of the province. There is currently a transfer of responsibility for services to the native community from the province. Children in non-native homes are provided regular contact with an Indian social worker. Native children should not be placed in non-native homes for adoption. Foster care is preferable with contact from a native social worker.

Many of the badly damaged adolescents are that way because of abuse suffered before coming into care, but also a lot of it (abuse) happened after they came into care.

Question:

What are some essential elements that a church could include in their program to draw families (attention) and to strengthen vulnerable families?

Larson:

The church needs to work with other community agencies. They can work together effectively, using the expertise of both churches and schools, to offer educational programming for adults to understand their problems and learn solutions for them. Vulnerable families like their children, but don't have the capacity to know how to handle them. They need to know how to understand themselves, how to change themselves, and they need encouragement and instruction. Group affirmation and feedback is essential to successful work with families.

SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

Panellists: Douglas Besharov
Maggie Hodgson
Linda MacLeod

Question:

Why is so much leniency shown by police in charging batterers of women? The crime is excused because " he is under stress because of this or that". More severe measures are taken against drunken driving.

MacLeod:

No quick answer, have been working on it for a year. Why are aggressive charging policies not being applied? Some police are not treating wife battering as a serious crime, but other police are good and see the stress that the legal process puts on women. I used to believe that aggressive charging was the answer, but now I see it is not enough. The whole justice system needs review and change, most people in the system would not want to go through the process themselves.

Participant:

Of course you don't rip an abused woman or child out of their home, you should take the perpetrator out of the home and put him in a shelter.

Question:

As you were involved with the judicial system in Toronto, you must know that sexually abused children are treated like trash by the judicial system, e.g. abuser of deaf-mute eight year old girl only given eight months in jail. Do you agree?

Besharov:

I can only speak for where I practice law, in New York and Washington, not Toronto. Same situation there. As Linda MacLeod said, I see it as a problem of the justice system. Do not want to sound far-right wing, but people who are convicted of crimes, any crimes, do not spend much time in jail. Prisons over full, judges overworked, we are lucky that people go to jail at all The system is close to breaking down.

All interest groups think "their" perpetrators are not punished enough, all victims seem to get short shrift now.

Question:

Could you tell us about vulnerable persons civil legislation? There is a lot of development in the U.S. in this regard, some provinces are looking at this for adults and the elderly. Such legislation might help avoid the secondary victimisation of abused people.

Besharov:

Mandatory reporting laws on reporting elder abuse are developing rapidly in the States. They present far more ethical problems than do child or woman abuse. The vision is of frail elderly being beaten. Self abuse is the real problem. Elders do not want to go into homes, have help or live with children but are happy where they are. Workers have to get court order to remove them from their own homes. Tremendous ethical problems. If we had known, we would have put in many more protections for the elderly from the state into the legislation.

Participant:

Appreciate Maggie Hodgson's comments. Would like to get some statistics from Doug Besharov after. Linda MacLeod talked about the need for services to remain at the grass roots level, I was pleased about this. When professionals come in, they do not know how to work with people, particularly Indian people. They cannot communicate, discrimination creeps in. A lot of our people do not have access to services despite Bill C31. Metis and Non-Status people and registered Indians, if they are urbanised and off the reserves, cannot get services from federal government. They get lost in the shuffle between the provincial and federal governments. Will Indian people be given the consideration they need? In 1969, my Association became independent of federal government so they could work with all Indian and Native people. Thank you.

Hodgson:

One thing I forgot to mention, I do not believe that alcohol causes violence, they occur simultaneously. Violence is still a crime and should be dealt with as such.

Participant:

One issue not raised that we will have to deal with is dating violence. Seeing more in shelters. Agree with Linda that the law is an area we have to deal with.

This hooks in to removing perpetrators from home, but that raises the question of protection, which takes us back to the law. We must look at our own controlling attitudes, we must leave decisions in people's own hands. Agree with Maggie, alcohol is not a cause of violence, it perhaps allows violence to happen, removes restraints. Hope people will rid themselves of the misconception that alcohol is the main problem.

Question:

If the perpetrator is removed from the home, how will safety be provided? A battered women -is currently not safe even if she moves from home, the police do not act. Services for battered women are not there in the community, if she does remain in her home. Could the panel tell me how women could be protected?

MacLeod:

Have to look at protection in a more holistic way. If we do remove the man, that does not mean we do away with transition houses. Woman would have the choice to stay in the home, or not. The man would need counselling and support, to take responsibility for his actions. Police deserve some chastisement for not protecting women, they do not take women seriously when she says she knows he is going to assault her, that all the signs are there. Community must be part of protection, giving support, saying we do not approve of violence. We need an attitudinal change.

Hodgson:

I was talking about removing the man in the context of a particular, safe, supportive community. That is essential.

Besharov:

Want to ask question, about alcohol. Equal problem now in States is crack use by parents. Is anyone here having to deal with that? Some, from Eastern Canada, Toronto, Quebec? Saskatchewan? Crack or cocaine? It is going across the U.S. from city to city. In New York city last year, 8,000 babies were born exposed to cocaine foetally, many had severe birth defects. Medical research is ambiguous, but crack does seem to change personality, users become violent, men as well as women. Has become our most serious child welfare problem.

Question:

I am from a different background. Our theatre group tours schools, we see the problems. We see a need for a community. Linda talked about community. Maggie - it is your community that is holding people together. Doug - your professional people need to form a community to approach child abuse.

How do we build community? We in the theatre group would like to help. What is the first step?

Hodgson:

Family and friends are closest catalyst for change, process is a spiral. We just ran drama project in downtown Edmonton, and on reserve, to help the community deal with the death of a teenager from impaired driving, helped with the grieving.

MacLeod:

Agree with Maggie to some extent, but have slightly different view, sometimes cannot get to individual, have to start more generally and hope to reach them that way. Community may come together over larger issues, then focus on specific problems from there. Theatre is a very powerful tool. I am not sure you can tell community what first step is, it has to be their own. Just keep your ear to the ground and be responsive.

Question:

You said trends in Canada follow behind U.S. This should give us a chance not to make same mistakes. Could you comment on some of the implications and issues. In particular, what about the differing roles of investigative child protection versus child welfare generally? How do you deal with a family where a child is at moderate risk, but parents are resistant to services?

Besharov:

What do you mean by moderate risk? (**Participant-** When you would not necessarily remove the children from the home). Can still be abuse, even though children remain in home. Have had big debate in U.S. Money is available for child abuse, when it is not available for other services such as mental health. There is a cost to this. You label people as abusive and neglectful when the may just be needful; you put them into a system designed to remove children from their parents; you conceal broader causes of social problems and underlying problems, e.g. female heads of households and the difficulties they experience. Individual treatment may not be the appropriate response.

Question:

Linda mentioned the Justice system, I agree. Many judges are very biased, nothing seems to be done. Could government push for changes where judges are involved? Also, I believe that under our Charter of Rights, we cannot force perpetrators to undergo treatment, what can be done there?

MacLeod:

There is now a Judicial Education Centre in Ottawa, they are looking for ways to sensitize judges. You cannot force judges to take training, but it is an opening. With respect to the Charter, this is a thorny issue. If we can change attitudes, men may go voluntarily. Maggie knows more about the program run by a judge in Hinton, Alberta, where sentence can be deferred if the offender goes for treatment. Sentence is still passed. Jim Clark, a police officer at Atlantic College wrote a paper pointing out that we do remove other perpetrators of crimes from their homes, so perhaps it is attitudes that need to change.

Hodgson:

I feel strongly on this issue. I knew a judge who used to sabotage the treatment of my alcoholic clients. He had a drinking problem. I intervened in his problem. One community went to talk to their judge and explain what they were doing, asked how they could help. Sometimes you just have to wait for the dinosaurs to die.

Question:

Interested in Maggie's comments on respect for elders, meaning that we respect their ability to be helped and should support them in this. In Newfoundland, with regard to the problems with the Christian Brothers, the Church has remained notoriously silent, now there are allegations that the Justice and Social Service systems did not respond. I think it may be easy for the victims and individuals to understand that notion of respect, but not for the authorities themselves. They think respect for authority means solidarity among professionals, whether it is covering up of malpractice among doctors, or the refusal to admit of violence in the home. Can Maggie give advice, from her culture to ours on how we get the "physicians to heal themselves"?

Hodgson:

No easy answer, not limited to priests, also social workers. I am a practising Catholic. I witnessed many of my friends abused by priests as children. Society can effect change for professionals. Church has no ethics committee in place for its priests. We have to ensure community support, through congregations. No stronger force than a congregation who wants to protect its priest. I was ostracised for challenging priest who said women deserved to be beaten, but he apologized in the end.

Participant:

///referring to comment on the judiciary. There is a Western Canada Judicial Education Centre, the continuing education of judges is extremely important. There was a conference in Vancouver for judges and other justice professionals two weeks ago, training is going on, we probably need more of it. Would like to commend Maggie and Linda for their humanistic ideas on dealing with the problem of violence, i.e. helping perpetrators. We have to take the approach of dealing with this problem as a community. We as individuals must get in there and help as well.

Participant:

///hopes that panellists will use their influence to support the efforts of Native people for a National Indian Child Welfare Act that recognizes the legitimate authority of Indian and Native communities to be the providers of child care and protection for their own children. Agrees with Maggie Hodgson that the solution to the difficulties facing aboriginal communities rests with those communities. Hopes all here will support their efforts.

Question:

Would Linda comment further on whether or not the criminal justice system is really responding appropriately to concerns around wife battering?

MacLeod:

This is an emotional matter. Want to make it clear that I am not questioning the criminality of wife assault, but do think we may be avoiding many issues by expecting the criminal justice system to deal with the whole problem. Many women feel that they have to wait too long for the system to work, that it is not set up for them, that a "fair' sentence does not feel fair to them. Believe people want justice, but our system is about law. People are looking at ways to make the system more sensitive so that women are not doubly victimized by being dragged through the courts. Judge Porter in Hinton, Alberta has been part of a concerted effort to train police, social workers, doctors and others, firstly in dealing with child abuse cases, now with wife abuse. His cases are dealt with quickly and sensitively; the perpetrator is encouraged to plead guilty and thus take responsibility for the action. Those who plead guilty are offered the opportunity to attend a treatment program and in that way the court becomes an advocate for them as well as the victim. Woman and child victims are given counselling as part of the program. The man is not let off after all this, he is sentenced.

This program shows that the justice system can be used to send a strong message that violence and abuse are unacceptable and to help the victims and the offender. Also, pre-trial hearings are being used in a limited way - women can be heard early in proceedings and advocates may appear on her behalf. We need to look at how our institutions may be perpetuating violence against women and children.

Participant:

Want to address the whole area of prevention. It is of primary importance, but we never really get to it because we are overwhelmed with the need for intervention and treatment. Little money or energy is left for prevention and there are often turf battles for what resources are available. Pastoral care workers are not always regarded as part of the system, but they are in the front line. The Ecumenical Family Ministries has produced a training program for these workers -"Ending Violence in Families". It is significant that Health and Welfare Canada has paid for the publication and distribution of this program. I am encouraging people to look at partnerships among and between the various sectors. I am discouraged by the lack of communication and fragmentation of approach between government, education, Justice, the churches, etc. When it comes to prevention, there is room for everyone to participate and find ways and means in their communities to work in a concerted way towards ending violence.

Participant:

Want particularly to thank Maggie for being the first speaker at this conference to see people, rather than objects or statistics. Her description helped us see people in a connected fashion, in their communities. I hope we are all going to take this message and philosophy away with us. I think particularly of teen-age mothers - who are their families, what are their communities? Are they just going to become clients of social institutions, or can we give them a sense of self, a sense of connectedness to the community, a sense of hope and purpose?

Question:

Three generations ago, Native communities and families were healthy, I would like to ask Maggie how many generations it will take before we can be back the way we were? Also, what are the major blocks in working with Native communities on sexual and other forms of abuse?

Hodgson:

It will take two to three generations at best. I offer my family as an example.

All my brothers and sisters and myself were abused in one way or another, many of us have been in therapy. My oldest son, now 25, is in therapy, and is getting healthier. I parented my twelve year old differently. I believe my children's children have the potential for being healthy. They have a sense of community. The key thing is leadership and role modelling. I am not saying that I am sick - I am well, and I'm getting weller! This is what is happening in our community.

Question:

Speakers have alluded to the issue of power, but it has not been discussed. When we work with disadvantaged people we often talk of "empowering" them. Yet power is a problem in the whole issue of violence. I would like the speakers to comment on how we can avoid getting caught up in this problem.

Hodgson:

Native culture would use the term "strength", white society would use "power".

MacLeod:

This issue came up at a think tank of the Canadian Advisory Council on the status of Women I was involved with. We came to the conclusion that there is power over (people, things), but there is also power through (interdependence, shared responsibility, shared action). There is also power within ourselves which can give us the strength to do things which are good, innovative, creative.

Question:

A lot has been said about wife abuse and child abuse. Would the panel comment on why so little is being said about elder abuse?

Besharov:

When we organized this panel, we said perhaps we should include elder abuse, but our moderator said, "Don't worry, someone will ask." This is a very serious problem, and we are beginning to develop programs to respond. In many states there are now mandatory reporting laws designed to identify elderly people who have been neglected or abused. But we must be careful how we look at this. The main abusers of the elderly are themselves. They prefer to stay in their own homes, not be forced into institutions. While it is important to build programs that protect elders from real abuse, we must be careful not to impose our solutions on them, if they are competent and just wish to be left alone.

Question:

Could Mr. Besharov tell us what is happening in the U.S. to reunite families after a violator has been prosecuted?

Besharov:

Few cases in the States result in prosecution, in most a social service approach is used. This can be troubling - a neglected child is far more likely to be removed from home than a physically abused child. In cases of sexual abuse, the child is likely to be removed and reunification can get complicated. The intervention may do more harm than good, as the child is put in a strange place, sometimes moved around, has a new school and so on, and cannot explain why. It is not surprising that six months later, the abuse is denied. Then the child is back home, because even that is better than what we have just put her through. Not exactly answering your question, what I am trying to say is that the decision that is made when the police or social worker is first at the door will shape what happens six months later.

THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

Panellists: Dr. Denise Avard
Dr. Carl D'Arcy
Dr. Jane Fulton

Question:

Mental illness was not mentioned in the presentations; mental health was mentioned only once. Yet there are problems related to deinstitutionalization and other mental health matters. Families need support in caring for mentally ill family members. The civil rights of the mentally ill often interfere with the ability of the family to get people into treatment. One of Saskatchewan's northern tribes is reported to have a high rate of schizophrenia according to the 'Schizophrenia Bulletin' which originates in the United States.

D'Arcy:

In Saskatchewan prior to 1961, it was relatively easy to commit an individual to a mental institution. Families have been known to abuse civil rights of individuals in the past. Today there is a need to balance the rights of individual, family and community. It is often difficult to balance these three interest groups.

In Saskatchewan deinstitutionalization meant taking old people out of mental hospitals and putting them in nursing homes at Level 4 care. Changes have occurred in the treatment of mental disorders in Canada and in Saskatchewan. We now hospitalize and treat more people for mental disorders than we did two to three decades ago, but we see them in hospitals and we treat them for shorter time periods.

Schizophrenia strikes less than 1% of the population. The more common mental disorders and mental diseases in North America and in Canada are anxiety disorders, phobias, depression and alcohol and drug abuse.

Question:

Alcohol is responsible for many accidents, depression, suicides, family break-up and abuse. Yet drinking is still considered to be socially acceptable. How can we facilitate attitudinal change that drinking must be done responsibly?

Fulton:

There must be agreement and action on the part of provincial governments to promote healthy lifestyles. This may include regulation of industries that make huge profits from the sale of alcohol and tobacco.

There is a need for the public to become aware of the effects of unhealthy lifestyles on the physical and emotional well-being of families. Some of the changes in values and attitudes can come about through education. For example, public media campaigns promote healthy lifestyles and teach that the irresponsible use of alcohol and tobacco is no longer socially acceptable.

Sojonky:

The most effective use of health education and promotion should be directed to mothers and children.

Question/Comment:

The need for changes in lifestyle-related illnesses and accidents is originating in communities. For example, the City of Penticton is now actively supporting 'dry grads' in that community.

Fulton/D'Arcy:

Some of the most imaginative and effective solutions to problems are coming from communities. These communities are bringing forth ideas, solutions and strategies to their legislators and bureaucrats for policy change and redirection.

Question/Comment:

Statistics reflect a high proportion of health-related problems for native populations. Do you think there are more health-related problems within native communities and on the reserves?

Avard:

Natives are a small proportion of the Canadian population but in Saskatchewan the statistics may have more validity because one in five persons in Saskatchewan is of native ancestry. The reasons for higher rates of health-related problems among the native population are unknown but is hypothesized that socio-economic conditions are contributing factors.

Question/Comment:

Research has indicated an inter-relationship between low income, anxiety and stress levels, low self-esteem, lack of knowledge and resources and the inter-generational effects of not being able to read. To what extent is illiteracy being examined in relation to health problems?

Fulton:

The City of Toronto is an example of an adult education program located in the housing projects of the downtown area. This program targets the illiterate and unemployed single parents who live in these developments. The program provides a head start education for moms and kids. They participate in family units with head start reading for both the kids and the moms conducted at the same time in the evening.

Question:

What can we do in Saskatchewan at the community level to help those people who can neither read nor write?

D'Arcy:

Use non-written material to communicate with these groups in the short term.

Fulton:

A long term project would include looking into the reasons people do not finish high school. This may include a pilot project to determine the interventions to resolve them.

Question:

Why do many of the programs that are in place to deal with health needs of Canadians, especially native Canadians, seem to be ineffective?

Avard:

The answer to this problem is related to 'process'. First it must be determined 'why' a program does not achieve its objectives. Secondly, the program itself must be examined for effectiveness. Often proactive information that facilitates a healthy lifestyle is not communicated to patients. This indicates a need for public policies that stress healthy lifestyles.

Question/Comment:

The concept of universality of health care is being questioned in some quarters. For example, a position that was promoted at a recent Invitational Health Conference was that the availability of acute care medicine should be cut back. this brings forward the notion of a two class medical care system; one system for the rich, another for the poor.

There is a broader jurisdictional problem of whose needs are being served. There is a need to change our orientation to health care issues. Solutions need to be community based.

Fulton:

Federal and provincial governments are too complex for real governing to take place. There is a need for some decision making authority to be shifted to municipalities and regions. Communities must be made strong. There is too much waste in the present system.

Health care budgets are going to outstrip the country's ability to provide health care as we presently know it. The changes that may need to occur will pose some moral dilemmas for individuals and policy makers alike.

Question:

There is a need to find simpler solutions and ways of educating individuals and families about how to provide themselves and their families with healthy lifestyles, i.e. how to prepare nutritious meals.

D'Arcy:

The problem is often one of communication. Communication must be a two way process. It is the responsibility of physicians and health care professionals to ensure that they communicate simply with individuals and families and that their message is understood by those receiving it. Experts cannot impose solutions on people; people need to be involved in decisions related to their own health and in order to do so effectively, they must be informed in language they can understand.

Comment:

A native person indicated it is very difficult for native persons to maintain healthy lifestyles because of problems related to alcohol, drug addictions, change in lifestyles between reserves and urban centres.

Question: (Panellist)

Given the problems that exist for natives on reserves and in urban centres, should programs be targeted to young mothers and their young children?

Answer: (Audience Participant)

Yes, programs should be targeted at the young. This is the place to start.

D'Arcy:

Three issues need to be addressed that are related to the native population in Canada:

- Need for better housing conditions because other health problems are related to poor housing.
- Need to improve sewer and water facilities on reserves.
- Need to examine vaccinations for influenza in native populations.

Question:

Were you (Dr. Carl D'Arcy) surprised at the results of the statistical data you collected, i.e. the distribution of diabetes between the native and non-native groups?

D'Arcy:

In some respects, I was surprised, especially in regard to differences in mortality between income groups. What was more surprising was the prevalence of diseases that are preventable.

EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

Moderators: Dr. Terry Morrison
Dr. Dorothy Rich
Keith Cooper

Question:

How can schools/teachers work together with the community?

Cooper:

Schools must take the concerns of parents seriously. Schools and community agencies must build links and develop programs together where appropriate. The reality of the school taking these concerns seriously (e.g. a committee of school staff and parents lobbying to have a traffic light installed to reduce the risk to children) results in the establishment of a process and a mechanism that bridges the gap and builds the link between school and community. In order to build these links, schools must not only listen to parents but also involve them in formulating the solutions. It is important to recognize that parents are not apathetic. The reason why independent schools succeed is that parents are involved and have direct input. Families and communities must recognize that teachers need support too, and that they understand parental concerns because they, too, are parents. Much greater demands are being placed on them. Changes in the system and the development of programs often occur because of advocacy movements. If parents and teachers, for example, were to approach the school trustee, or board or administrator with a clear description of the problem and the absolute need for action, attention is more likely to be given.

Question:

What can school divisions do to help reverse the incidence of malnutrition and poverty?

Cooper:

The key to poverty is not school lunch programs but rather an economy which produces jobs and equity. While malnutrition is an educational issue too, schools are neither the cause nor the answer. At the same time, schools must be prepared to respond. Malnutrition and hunger is a broad social problem that schools can play a part in.

Schools must develop activities that can be carried out with families, such as information or programs on more nutritious breakfasts and lunches. Schools must share the knowledge and responsibility with families. Many families are still uninformed regarding the importance of nutrition and learning. Families must be informed and encouraged to take responsibility for ensuring that their children are physically well prepared for learning. Schools must build the connection with parents to share this information and responsibility.

Question:

In the context of "letting children be children", should we be considering letting families have more flexibility in deciding when to start their children at school, and revising the way in which we group kids in classes by age?

Morrison:

The level of expectations for children in school has become adult expectations. Too much emphasis on testing, streaming and categorization. Many merits to an inter-generational approach which builds on individuals of many ages. Focus on literacy comes from business sector, and this puts unnecessary pressure on children.

Question:

Schools are primarily oriented toward middle class students. The system ignores those who do not fit in. How can administrators and policy makers be made to accept responsibility for the wide mandate they have, including approaching the legislative and funding agencies and policy makers? How can we make administrators accept the responsibility for drawing and keeping in these students?

Morrison:

Reality is that administrators feel their role is to bring "good news" back to their boards. In order to effect changes, it is necessary to find out who makes the decisions and has the power. Not always the people in the formal position of power. Can be done through mobilization of people. Administrators must be encouraged to see their role as including the responsibility for attracting and retaining children who might be likely to leave the system. This role is necessarily an active one - by creating an atmosphere that makes the learner feel he/she can function, succeed, belong and be valued. Administrators must see themselves as serving not only their school boards but also their students and families.

__Question__:

Would the doors between community and school open more if communities approached schools without blame, and offered collaboration to address problems?

__Morrison__:

There is not really an informed debate about education today; rather, a lot of blaming and scape-goating. It is important to realize the problems of the world won't automatically be solved by the children and the school system. Calibre and commitment of teachers needs to be applauded. Schools need to be prepared to enter into partnerships with families and communities and must be prepared to transcend their jurisdiction and profession. Communities must realize that the demands made on schools are rapidly increasing and becoming more complex. Parents face increasing stress in terms of time and resources, and thus ask the school to do more. Schools cannot be expected to do everything by themselves. However, they can be asked to work on collaborative approaches to many of these demands and issues.

__Question__:

How can government be influenced to have more flexibility in funding to accommodate changing needs? How are we defining "growth and development" as our measure of success?

__Morrison__:

Goal of growth and development should be: providing individuals with skills to make good, informed life choices. Schools should focus on anything that affects the growth and development of children and their ability to learn to make choices. We sometimes become so organizationally complex that we forget simple principles like people collaborating because they live in a common community. To deal with inflexible budgeting, the first thing to be done is for school boards and staff to sit down and clearly identify the problems. Budgets can be so inflexible that they impose ridiculous actions and programming. In the context of identifying these kinds of problems to school administrators, it is necessary to present very specific examples of how the inflexible budget process could be resulting in poor utilization of money and restricted impact. The case for sensibility as opposed to more spending must be made. For example, the capacity to draw on other professionals/social workers/counsellors when needed could greatly improve service and value.

Question:

What are the implications of some of these issues for teacher training?

Morrison:

The principle of lifelong learning and acceptance of the fact that people also learn outside the classroom must be applied to teacher training. Teachers cannot learn everything in training institutions. We must be prepared to allow teachers the opportunities to continue to learn from both their working environments and further information from universities. Those involved in directing teacher training must share with administrators the challenge of responding to the demands placed on teachers and schools. Teacher training must include the importance of building links between schools and families/communities. Teachers must be taught a wider vision of teaching, and given specific skills to build these links rather than just imparting knowledge. Teacher training must be rid of the attitude that parents are not informed about education and therefore should stay out of it. Teachers must deal with decreasing resources and increasing class loads, and unless support and encouragement is there for them, they will not be willing to accept input.

WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

**Panellists: Judith MacBride-King
Eldon M. Ferguson
John Mills**

Question:

Did the Conference Board of Canada look at the impact of technology on the ability to respond and to provide different kinds of support that might enhance people's ability to either leave the home or work out of the home?

MacBride-King:

No, that was not addressed in their research. However, the responder was aware of corporations that have instituted information referral programs or computer programs which enable employees with family members in other parts of Canada to access information on services available in that area to assist with the family member's care, ie. home care, nursing care, etc.

Question:

Is there any data available on whether or not the presence of an Employee Assistance Program within a company affects the turnover rate of employees and whether or not it makes a difference to men or women more?

MacBride-King:

There is no data available on that specifically. It has not been measured and it is a very difficult thing to measure. There are too many other factors to draw a line, but the general feeling is there certainly are some benefits and pay-offs. Users of programs are 50-50 male-female.

Question:

Is there anything being done at either a federal or provincial level to include Employee Assistance Programs/Services in the social benefits to all workers?

Ferguson:

Not aware if there is. Responder agrees there is a role for government to play. Employers generally would not be able to afford the per capita costs.

Question:

Describe what has been learned from research on the sandwich generation and the nature of its composition pertaining to work and family.

MacBride-King:

The sandwich generation - a situation where women who have delayed childbirth until they are a little older than they did before, may still have children at home while they are providing care for an elderly family member. The research shows that 17% of the respondents (7003) said yes to providing care in these situations.

Question:

What number or percentage of organizations that offered Employee Assistant Programs involved joint union-management programming as opposed to unilateral management programming?

MacBride-King:

Conference Board of Canada does not have that information from their survey.

Question:

To what extent in Xerox Canada is the aggregate data that is fed back from the Employee Assistance service provider used to address or indicate structural issues within the workplace? Is that information used to address workplace management issues?

Mills:

The data does show trends, problems that are developing, larger issues they should address and the organization is looking at one of considerable significance.

Question:

Why does Health and Welfare Canada seem so opposed to job-sharing and what could be done to further its cause? (Employee of Health and Welfare Canada).

Ferguson:

It will work as soon as someone makes it happen - you need someone at a management level to take responsibility and make it happen. Whatever you do, don't stop trying.

Question:

Has the Conference Board of Canada heard any concerns about computer technology that is going to perhaps put women back in the home now that we have got them out of the home?

MacBride-King:

Point is well made but the Conference Board has not looked at that. Monica Townsend has done some work on that point and Kathleen Christiansen (U.S.) has recently written a book on work at-home arrangements.

Question:

Is it possible for corporations in a sense to become communities and provide total support for their employees?

Ferguson/Mills:

I don't think so. It takes teamwork but the team does not have to be all in one place or under one jurisdiction. Remember, corporations really only concern themselves with the bottom-line. Don't believe all they say about a social conscience. We also need co-ordination and that is going to require government because who else will take the initiative. The private enterprise will not do that type of total community support system for families on their own.

Question/Comments:

With respect to the inability of the federal government department to respond to job-sharing, it may be that there are structural problems where part-time employees may lose benefits.

Encouraged by the partnership between the government and the private sector, it is further along than a couple of years ago.

Ferguson:

Don't give up on the part-time work because of the benefits. The benefit carriers are looking at that very carefully right now and they'll be there very soon.

Question:

Have you considered career re-training and career updating as an essential variable in the coming decade?

MacBride-King:

A group at the Conference Board, the Human Resource Development Centre, is looking at that.

Ferguson:

Clarkson and Gordon has looked at it with people who have left the workforce for 3 or 4 years. It works well, particularly if the person comes back on a part-time basis first.

Mills:

Xerox Canada devotes a great deal of time, effort and resources to continuous training and re-training. Constant training is essential in the technology industry.

Question:

There is a role for professional associations, labour unions to provide services like EAP in small work units. Can we use professional training or articling programs and should we establish monitoring programs between established professionals and emerging professionals to do some preventative work and head-off problems which may later send employees to EAP?

Ferguson:

Monitoring programs work best. However, it can't be structured; it must be on an informal matching basis.

Question:

A number of employers indicate they have an Employee Assistance Program yet they only have a referral service. This isn't a service because the service agencies, ie. Family Service Bureau can't cope. The employee becomes number 101 on a waiting list of 100. Is there any work being done to get a broad understanding of what employee assistance programs really should be?

Mills:

If you don't provide the counselling service, than you are only a referral service.

Question:

Do you see any movement toward marketing companies that are saying, "buy our product/use our service" because we are a sensitive and caring employer?

Mills:

Doesn't see it now other than when a company is recruiting.

Question:

How can a company expand the preventative aspect of what they are doing? Our company provides monthly education seminars for employees on company-time related to stress, technological change, budgeting, etc.

Mills:

Xerox also does similar things at lunch hours and after hours. They need help dealing with the broader issues and more major problems, ie. alcohol and drug abuse in the workplace.

Question/Comment:

Alberta Parks and Recreation has a Leisure Lifestyle Development and one of their consultants deals with employee fitness and wellness programs and promoting the benefits within businesses and the government. It deals with the more preventative aspects of nutrition, health, physical activity and fitness. They can give employers information on what these programs can do for them and their employees.

Ferguson.

Clarkson and Gordon - has a sport program for fitness and health clubs. They pay the first $200 or $300 of the membership. The employee must take a fitness test twice a year. There is 80% participation. Do not intend to build their own fitness centre. Agrees that the more fit you are, the less problems you have psychologically.

Mills:

Xerox Canada - has a fitness subsidy program which is also a cardiovascular program. - also have a "Living Well Team" partnership between the health professionals, the wellness program people and EAP. Referral between them is now much more deliberate and focused.

Question:

Does either Clarkson and Gordon or Xerox Canada have a worksite or workplace child care program?

Ferguson:

Clarkson and Gordon - has an information counselling referral.

Mills:

Xerox Canada - do not have a worksite day care. It did not make sense for Xerox because for as many employees who wanted on-site care an equal number said they didn't.

Question/Comment:

Providing a referral service does not solve all the problems as there are not enough child care spaces.

Ferguson:

Clarkson and Gordon - insurance costs for on-site child care is prohibitive, that is why they only provide emergency child care.

Question:

Day care is one of the major problems women face when working. If insurance costs are so high, why can Fitness Centres, shopping malls, businesses, provide it, but not other employers? Are there different insurance rates?

Ferguson:

The places mentioned already have large public liability insurance costs; Clarkson and Gordon doesn't - neither would other employers.

Question/Comment:

On-site day care is a panacea for people without young children. Yet it really isn't - there are a lot of ramifications. Some child care centres near schools will not allow children to go there during lunch or before and after school unless the child attended the centre before they went to school. Also, what would happen if you lost your job? On-site sounds good. But it is not so practical.

Ferguson:

Reaction from the parent committee at Clarkson was they didn't want their children downtown.

Question:

What are the cost-saving benefits of an Employee Assistance Program?

Mills:

Xerox Canada - There are real benefits. EAP has probably helped 400 people a year. Although they do not have any hard data or real statistics; this lack of data does not put the program in jeopardy.

MacBride-King

Conference Board - There are so many variables, it is really difficult to do this kind of analysis. The United States is looking at some forms of measurement. Certainly is a perception that certain programs alleviate stress, reduce absenteeism and reduce turnover.

Question:

Who is covered under employee assistance programs?

Mills:

Xerox Canada - employee, immediate family, retirees, parents, etc.

Ferguson:

Clarkson and Gordon - employee and direct family or significant others. Program goes as far as it is needed.

Question:

Has information from the service providers of Employee Assistance Programs been used to restructure work or the work environment?

MacBride-King:

Conference Board of Canada did not look at it in their research. Yet the prevalent forms of programs employers offer have to do with work restructuring, ie. flexible hours.

Ferguson/Mills:

The other respondents indicate they respond to feed-back from the programs and make changes as needed/appropriate.

LAW AND FAMILIES

Panellists: Freda Steel
Barbara Nelson Q.C.
Dr. Margrit Eichler

Question:

Was any attempt made to define rights and privileges of parents or to change the law to recognize mental age as opposed to chronological age in the province of British Columbia?

Nelson:

We did hear from many groups of the disadvantaged; including the mentally handicapped and heard from mentally handicapped people themselves with their concerns about the Justice system. This is a very complex area, but while parents might lose their rights and responsibilities over a child over the age of 19, the law does not. The law always continues its responsibilities over the dependent individuals and communities are appointed if not the parent, then the public trustee.

Question:

What can be done about the whole area of sentencing? How can we get to judges? To those who are making decisions regarding homosexual families and that they can be a real family?

Question:

What can we do to give a woman the kind of protection she needs in order to be able to have access to the property that is hers (i.e. battered women who leave their home after being abused)?

Nelson:

Sexual Abuse: Governments and the courts are responding much better than they did in the past to issues surrounding sexual abuse. I don't think there is a problem with the legislation--as we all know, legislation provides for very heavy sentences. The problem lies with the judiciary. We need to educate the judiciary and need some consciousness raising. Having individuals from varying backgrounds on the judiciary is very important.

Issues of the battered women--I think there are initiatives being taken in various jurisdictions across the country. Battered women need access to legal services, including 24-hour access to judges at very short notice.

Question:

The conflict between public intervention rights and private rights is a difficult problem for families suffering from schizophrenia. Because people are afraid that the rights of the mentally ill are being abused, there is a big swing toward making committal procedures more difficult, so now families are the victims because it is almost impossible to get a person committed. We want the right to timely treatment for family members and protection and who now must maintain persons in the home and try to care for them when they are perhaps a danger.

Steel:

The conflict between legal equality and economic reality in society is difficult. Sometimes government is only too happy to pass legislation that achieves certain so-called reforms, like the deinstitutionalization movement of the 1960's. What happens is you get the legal reform without the money and that is worse than not having changed at all. I think that has happened in a number of areas.

Question:

What do you mean by separate rights of families?

Eichler:

I do not support rights of families under any circumstances. I argue for rights of individuals within families recognizing they are located in particular relationships. I believe that institutions are there to serve individuals and not the other way around.

Question:

Do you see any future for the concept of the legal marriage? Would it change the marriage law? What is the future role of the common-law marriage?

Nelson:

The issue of common-law relationships has generated much controversy. Children have certain rights vis-a-vis their parents, whether or not marriage exists, but vis-a-vis the two spouses, it's really a matter of how we view the union between two individuals--whether or not we feel the state should mandate certain obligations.

Marriage remains a very important institution. We are in a state of change due to the dilemmas and the changing roles of sexism in our society. The institution of marriage will become stronger. The rights of common-law spouses and the rights of legal spouses are not the same; although in some cases the law states them to be similar (i.e. that a common-law spouse is entitled to some level of support).

Eichler:

Marriages have legal and economic consequences and are important both socially and religiously. Marriage involves a public statement in which two people say they wish to spend the rest of their lives together and this makes a difference in how people think about themselves. However, perhaps we should treat this as merely a symbolic statement. Spouses must be treated as independent legal personalities.

Question:

A particular problem was raised regarding use of the Criminal Code child abduction sections.

Nelson:

I think the answer to properly using these sections is in educating the Crown Attorneys.

Question:

Why shouldn't there be a minimal penalty for assault of women as there is for drinking and driving?

Nelson:

While a minimal penalty could be set for family violence, this is not an answer to family violence.

Question:

Should judges be more accountable for their decisions?

Nelson:

We need clearer statements of public policy and where judges have reportedly said discriminatory things or acted in a discriminatory manner, they should be disciplined.

Question:

Can mediators be of assistance to keep count of the backlogs down and allow people to have some degree of control over this very, very important part of their life?

Nelson:

Yes, mediation can be used as one of the solutions. I do not believe in mandatory mediation, but feel that people should be encouraged strongly to mediate their problems. We need education of the judiciary and the legal profession about mediation. Mediation is not an alternative by itself, but it can be in addition. My experience in my own practice in referring clients to mediation is that even where the mediation has been a failure because an agreement has not been reached, very often the information has been exchanged and the litigation or settlement process is easier.

Question:

Many native children have been apprehended and I feel this is wrong as our people do not live under the laws of general society. We have a separate law. The apprehension of our children continues. We want to take care of our own children rather than see them apprehended, put into foster homes and then enter the penal institutions. Is there any way you can help us with this?

Steel:

Our legal system reflects our society and consequently, has elements of racism and sexism in it. The practice of apprehension of native children has been described as genocide. In Manitoba, native child care agencies have been established. These agencies are native staffed and handle child abuse and child protection problems for their own children and their own areas. The aboriginal justice inquiry going on in Manitoba is looking into the question of Indian tribal courts.

Question:

Are there situations where the application of family law is more appropriate in physical or sexual abuse cases than the criminal law?

Nelson:

The resources of the state must be directed during early stages to family support, identifying potentially abusive families and providing support. Where there has been a serious incident of sexual abuse, I believe that charges must be laid.

Justice must be seen to be done to support the public belief that we, as a society, will not allow sexual abuse of children and that same actions will be dealt with by the criminal law.

Question:

How is divorce mediation working in British Columbia and Manitoba?

Answer:

In British Columbia, lawyers are being trained to do family mediation. Manitoba has invested heavily in mediation facilities, has a unified family court at Superior Court level, has access to free mediation and counselling services and has free services and private mediators as well. The free services are restricted basically to custody mediation and not financial mediation. The services are so successful that when someone wanted to do a study a few years back about couples that had custody disputes that were mediated and not mediated, he could not find a control sample of non-mediated custody disputes because our family courts regularly referred them to the free mediation counselling to begin with. Some concerns about mediation are that there are no standards for mediators; there are great concerns with respect to the kinds of disputes that should be mediated (particulary family violence of a power imbalance). There is no longer strong support for mandatory mediation. In British Columbia, primarily in the provincial court systems, family court counsellors do conciliation, but this is separate from mediation.

Question:

What of the dilemma of parents of mentally handicapped children? They are responsible for caring for the child, but cannot make decisions for the child such as sterilization.

Answer:

This is part of the list of dilemmas.

Question:

I object to statements suggesting that the traditional family no longer exists. No civilization has been able to hang on to a social order if you start breaking down the family.

Answer:

The phrase "traditional family" means the husband going out to work and women working inside the home.

While that was the majority of families until ten or fifteen years ago, it is the minority at present. That kind of traditional family has disappeared.

Question:

Technological change in terms of in-vitro fertilization, frozen embryos, sperm banks and surrogacy brings us smack up against the question of what are we envisioning in terms of the value of human relationships?

Answer:

This whole area is one of the most important confronting us at the present. Surrogacy, however, is one of the easier ones to come to a position on. In Canada, there is a law that prohibits the selling of children. Canadians go to the United States to engage in these contracts and Canadians also engage in it as individuals. I did a study for the Law Reform Commission of Canada in 1987 looking at the incidence of surrogacy among Canadians and found more than 100 substantiated cases involving Canadians. That is probably a gross under-determination. We found that the files show as contractual mothers many more women than actual buyers. At this point, we still have a policy statement in Canada that you cannot buy or sell humans.

Other reproductive technology raises issues even more confusing. One of the problems with in-vitro fertilization is the success rate. The estimates are between three and thirteen percent, which means that 87% to 95% don't have a child and are exposed to extremely strong drugs. Do we wish to create human beings according to order? Will we allow manipulation of embryos?

It is possible now to identify the genetic mark-up for Alzheimer's Disease. Now someone has to make the decision whether this is the embryo that we wish to carry to term or not because of an illness that may occur when they are 65. These are decisions which we have never been able to make as a human society because we did not have the technical capacity to generate these things. Now, we must make these decisions. That is the real dilemma that we are confronting now.

Question:

What about the abuse of the unborn child through abortion or the sale of human parts on the black market for cosmetics? What about children not being fed or clothed, or being beaten up by parents or perverts? How are we going to go about finding out about abuse and finding a solution?

__Answer__:

I think there is a difference in terms of somebody who is here as a person and somebody who is perhaps about to become a person. There are many adults who are being abused, but at this point, we are talking about responsibility not to abuse children. I think the state should enforce this. That means I reject violence toward adults or anybody else in physical form.

COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

Panellists: **Allan Mirabelli**
Dr. Richard Lewis
Dr. W. Lambert Gardiner

Question:

People at the conference have a great deal of knowledge and familiarity with the subjects. The questioner wondered how you move from familiarity to understanding, compassion and action.

Mirabelli:

One of the biggest problems that they face at the Vanier Institute is trying to deal with that question. When understanding is reached, it is usually reached concerning one narrow aspect of family. What is required is some kind of framework to help us with this examination. Dr. Scot Gardiner suggests that the new technologies may allow us to move into a more rural environment. Emphasis on knowing your neighbours and interacting with them on a regular basis. Mirabelli discussed the village square concept of a European village where the architecture produces the medium for social action. In North America, school and peer groups become the dominant influence and we seem to lose out on cutting across age groups and disciplines. We lose the richness of the culture. Family, then, does not presently seem to be rooted in the community.

Question:

New Brunswick delegate, directed to Allan Mirabelli. She asked about the impact of television on individuals. Mirabelli had suggested that it was hard to measure this. She asked if the MacDonald's people would agree with him that this impact is hard to measure.

Mirabelli:

A very indirect response, which led to making agreements with children to ration their television viewing. Allan's main message was that if children had a variety of experiences, they would be better equipped to stand up to the messages from powerful advertisers.

Question:

Question from Health and Welfare Canada staff person concerning the need for soap operas or shows that deal with seniors' issues. The person mentioned a show from Vancouver called "The Best Years" that was cancelled. She felt that these program are needed in order to encourage seniors and to teach others about the utility of seniors.

Lewis:

Dr. Lewis indicated that his board attempts to positively portray seniors on Sesame Street.

Question:

Alberta Women's Council of Transition Houses. Ongoing debate as to whether or not they should have a television in shelters. Some feel it allows people to avoid dealing with their problems. Asked for guidance from the panel.

Lewis:

Dr. Lewis said that they should use the televiewing creatively by discussing what had been seen. Mirabelli recommended that they should not create more stress for battered women by banning television. However, he was concerned if the women watched scenes of violence, the shelter might not be able to deal with the aftermath of abused women viewing that violence.

Question:

A question was asked about what governments can do to promote Canadian content. They felt that television was better prior to our receipt of all of the extra channels from the United States.

Mirabelli/Gardiner:

Mirabelli answered that the role of government is to promote diversity. He feels that with the present government climate and the Free Trade Agreement, that there is not a great deal of will to move ahead in producing Canadian programming.

Dr. Gardiner was concerned with television reducing our creative capacities to entertain ourselves. He gave a couple of examples. One--His family in Scotland sitting around the fireplace and seeing very different things in the fire. Two--He said that when he was in graduate school, he used to go down to the laundromat and stare at laundry circulating and make up soap operas.

His point was that the media influence can be very positive and people have turned it into a negative by talking about information overload. His other point was that we don't have to suffer from information overload. We simply cut down on how much information we use. Some of that information, if it is the right type, can stimulate creativity in others.

Question:

Next question is from a New Brunswick delegate. Concerned with children being desensitized by the horrible things that they see on newscasts. How do you handle this so that you can turn it into something productive?

Mirabelli:

Mirabelli indicated that he would only be concerned if the children were blocking out all news stories. If they are not concerned with the crisis in Lebanon, that doesn't necessarily mean that they are ignoring all of the news. If they ignore everything on the news, then he feels that it could indicate a problem.

Question:

A question came from a woman who had spent time in Northern Manitoba. The question was, "What can we do to unite communities?"

Answer:

The answer was that we have to look at how the media is being used in an area and adapt it to local conditions. Media can have a very positive role and communities should capitalize on it. For example, people used the radio to send messages to neighbours. Everyone had a radio; therefore, they started putting health messages on the radio as well. It worked.

Question:

Question from the Edmonton Community College system. A woman was struggling to make connections in all the seminars.

Mirabelli/Lewis:

Mirabelli suggested that it wasn't possible to make sense of such major concepts in a one-hour question period. Part of the problem in communities is that our programs are all age and gender-specific. Play becomes hard work. We don't interact with one another, but maintain a separateness of sex, culture, age, etc. Concern was expressed about this isolation.

Dr. Lewis indicated that he and his colleagues are studying to see why commercials work so they can apply the techniques used in commercials to education.

Question:

Question from Gaston Gauthier. "Why should I be optimistic about living in a global village?" Basically, Dr. Gardiner stressed that it can allow you to live in a small community and improve your lifestyle while keeping abreast of all technological change.

Observation:

Allan Mirabelli felt that we have the wrong culture (currently) for the community to use the computer informatics scenario. We need the village square concept to be able to cut through the isolationism that comes about from computer technology. Dr. Lewis pointed out that economic factors preclude people from using the technology that the panellists are using.

Question:

A gentleman from New Careers liked the analysis that because families are tired, television becomes valium. However, he wanted strategies to overcome this problem and unite the family.

Recommendation:

Mirabelli suggested that when he was separated, with a young child, he got the child to participate with him in whatever was happening each day. He warned that this takes a great deal of energy and that in the younger ages, kids make a terrible mess and "don't do it right." However, this improves with age and experience. He also related his idea of giving his child a television allowance and then getting him to diversify his experience by doing other things when his television allowance ran out. Apparently, that negotiated strategy was successful with Mirabelli's family.

Observation:

A Yorkton woman shared an experiment that her three children are engaging in. No television for one year. Mother is the only one who watches television, but she watches it alone in the bedroom and has to turn it off if someone comes to interact with her. They are currently four months into the experiment. Dr. Lewis commented that when they were in France, they learned to do things without television, even though they were all bilingual. He claims that some activities force you to communicate--tennis, swimming, etc.--while television isolates.

Mirabelli cited a 1973 experiment in Detroit where 500 families were going to be paid $500.00 per month for not watching television. No one collected.

Observation:

The issue of "private time" came up. A female delegate indicated that a family needs time for people to be together, but other times to be separate and reflective. They recently bought a television after no television for 20 years and found out that television cuts into that time. They were not feeling as good about their lives as a result.

Question:

A delegate posed a personal question, and a counselling session was set up for him. He attended the session.

Question:

Question from Sask Health: How do agencies and families communicate with each other? The question asked for help with some tactics in strategies for communication. Questioner wanted practical information (eg. Should we use print material?)

Lewis:

Dr. Lewis responded. "If I don't need water, I won't drink it." He suggested that we always look for things we need. He offered to share the 40 appeals that television commercials use in order to get our attention. All of these commercials look to some of our needs. He suggested that communicators have to identify with one of these needs and then try to get your information across using that. Another message was that it is very hard to get information from government.

Observation:

Mirabelli described information centres in Holland that act as central data banks for public and private information.

Question:

Jane Berry a New Brunswick legislator, wanted to know what governments can do about people who are watching television to the exclusion of other activities. Her question centered around what policy directions governments could follow in terms of content. How can we stave off cultural influences from the United States?

Mirabelli answered by posing a question. Should we street-proof a child, or should we create public environments that people want to be in?

Recommendation:

He still feels the best method of control is to create superior programming that people will want to watch. However, he doesn't feel that this is likely at present. Lewis felt that he should do workshops in his own Windsor community. We can't get people to control, but we can get them to self-censor. He feels that politicians say that direction has to come from the grassroots and the grassroots people say it has to come from political leadership. He feels that they have to teach people how to communicate locally.

Generally, there were a couple of questions with people asking for methods and strategies of better communication. Dr. Lewis said that experts were reluctant, on a practical level, to offer recipes for such action.

Question:

There was a question about whether or not the profit motive affects media adversely.

Mirabelli:

Mirabelli pointed out that the main reason that everything isn't as high quality as it might be stems from the fact that there is too great a need for programming. He pointed out that there aren't very many good novels written in a year in Canada, and indeed, not many in the world. However, people expect 18 hours a day of high quality television.

Observation:

They also talked about a northern community that obtained a limited radio licence to speak on community related topics. This was added to by the elderly telling stories and doing songs and helping people discover some of the folklore of that community. Mirabelli discussed it in terms of an extension of the community hall to radio.

Question:

The panel was asked why women are addicted to soaps. Dr. Gardiner suggested that it's simply for want of something better to do.

Mirabelli:

Mirabelli pointed out that with VCR's, there are a lot of men who are soap opera addicts as well. The panel failed to deal with the underlying question of why people were seemingly wasting their time on these endeavours.

Post-conference, panellists were asked to summarize their thoughts on topics raised at the panel. The panellists responded with the following material:

Mirabelli:

Family life has changed dramatically during the past 30 years. Now commitments and obligations fragment family time and energy. As a result, families choose to devote more and more time to television in order to seek relief and refuge from demanding economic, social and family pressures.

If the medium has an undue effect, it is largely by default as more and more of our familiarity with our community and the world comes from television and less and less from the lived experiences which are gained from being engaged in and with a diversity of persons and activities. Cues for appropriate behaviour in new and unfamiliar situations (socialization) are therefore derived more and more from television and "how to" books and less and less from persons engaged in the community who reflect the norms and values of that community and its families.

Recommendations:

Mirabelli:

1. Engage more in the informal, neighbourly community's activities--seek for yourself as an adult and your children intergenerational contact on a regular basis.

2. Be conscious that we use the medium's "real time" quality as a convenient tool to avoid family discussions which can be affirming for members of the family.

3. If television is watched in moderation and people are engaged more and more in alternate activities, then we need be less worried about what is watched as program messages will be counter-balanced by community standards. Our preference for undue isolation and privacy may contribute more to television's effect than any particular program.

4. Teach children by example to time budget their viewing.

5. As a nation, we should concentrate less on control of content since imported signals cannot be managed, and pursue excellence on Canadian airwaves in the hope of displacing some of the programs we may find more objectionable.

__Lewis__:

1. Families need help in handling interaction with media. This help can come through the social services establishment, the education system and other public and private organizations. The help should be in the form of instructional materials and workshops.

2. Social service and other public agencies need help in designing messages and materials dealing with television and other media.

3. Social services and other agencies need help in using television to communicate their messages.

4. There may be a role for the federal and provincial governments in ensuring that Canadian and other family oriented programming is available to the Canadian viewer.

__Gardiner__:

Recommendations are in the form of recommendations for policy:

- **Assume the best way to predict the future is to create it.**

  This is an axiom of policy. You must assume that you can make interventions which can have an effect on reality. However, it is surprising how many politicians are determinists.

- **Nurture the same activist attitude in your clients.**

  The first step in changing your life is the belief that you can change it.

- **Recognize that we are now in a post-industrial society, based on information, rather than an industrial society, based on energy.**

  The revolution is over. Many of our problems are due to the fact that many people--especially those who are older and are thus in positions of power--are still living in the industrial society of the past.

- **Focus on the information-processing devices in the home as the most important instruments of change in the family.**

The telephone is not simply another household utensil and the television set is not simply another piece of furniture.

- **Encourage development of such information-processing devices as a means of making the home more central to society.**

The modern home has degenerated to a service station, to fill up during the day and to park at night, because so many of its pre-industrial functions have been subcontracted out to other institutions.

- **Encourage particularly those technological developments around the telephone rather than the television set.**

The telephone system in which we are all sources as well as destinations is a better infrastructure for the global village than the television system in which we tend to be passive destinations for information beamed down the electronic highway from a few large sources.

- **Within the television system, encourage those developments which contribute to the revolt of the couch potato.**

Step one is the remote control, so that you can browse through channels;

Step two is the VCR, so that you can watch what you want when you want;

Step three is interactive video, where you can explore many frames in any order;

Step four is desktop video production, where you can be the director/producer of your own education/entertainment.

- **Encourage the use of home computers which have finally found their niche as media in their own right, with the introduction of Hypermedia.**

The link of the computer to the telephone is the modem. It enables one to pull in information from vast electronic stores of information. The equivalent link of computers to the television set is just emerging. This whatsit is clumsy and expensive as yet, but will gradually reach the efficiency and economy of the modem. It enables one to use the computer as an editor, with which to edit not only frame-by-frame but pixel-by-pixel.

- **Beware of technological fixes.**

The above recommendations would seem to suggest that the solution to all our domestic and social problems are technological. However, I am merely holding out the hope that the new informatics technology will strengthen the family by making the home a more attractive place, since it will be possible to work-play-learn (wopple) at home. Family is important since that is the locus of intimate relationships, which are the basis for the Good Person and the Good Society.

FAMILY INCOME

Panellists: **Terrence Hunsley**
Dr. Thomas Courchene
Dr. Ian Stewart

Question:

Is it more difficult to take Old Age Security away and make payments to those in need or to tax this universal program?

Stewart:

Guaranteed annual income schemes recognize that gross payments and net taxbacks are vastly larger than the net proceeds that remain with those who don't have all their gains taxed back. There is continuing debate about the universality of social systems. A guaranteed annual income does away with universality and taxes back those who don't need it. Any effective guaranteed annual income scheme demands a simple tax structure.

Courchene:

There is a general view that we should tax corporations more. With corporations, we will get less money if we raise taxes because the tax base is floatable. Corporations will transfer their profits elsewhere.

Stewart:

If taxback rates are to encourage transitions from welfare to employment, they have to be a rate which makes it attractive to earn income when one moves from a guaranteed income to an earned income position.

If we want social systems that are more beneficent to the poor and maintain a more caring, just, equitable system than the United States, for example, it is almost inevitable that we will suffer tax rates that are higher. It demands that the government spend money the way Canadians want them to in order to persuade them to weather higher tax rates.

Hunsley:

Government expenditures must be targeted more effectively to low income people. Getting rid of universal programs is not the most effective way to achieve this. If we want equity, we would look at government subsidies in areas like registered pension plans and registered retirement savings plans and not worry about decreasing universal programs.

Question:

Clarify the statements regarding the negative taxback rate relative to welfare.

Courchene:

When you go back to work, you may lose welfare payments, housing allowances or free drug plans. It is the combination of the entire expenditure system and not just the narrowly defined social assistance. This combination and the contributions made to various programs when working leaves you less take-home pay.

Hunsley:

Keeping social assistance rates less than minimum wage contributes to the problem.

Courchene:

I would rather have a wage supplementation and leave wages to be determined by the market under some sort of guaranteed annual income than distorting the labour market by having an artificially high minimum wage. Welfare recipients facing 100% taxback rates are ingenious in activity driven against the system. Let's devise a system where the incentives help the individual and society.

Hunsley:

We talk about social spending as if it is spiralling and there's no indication it is spiralling out of control. If you look at social spending as a total package, and if you accept the study of the International Monetary Fund published in 1986, it showed that if Canada indexed all social programs to inflation, our social spending would still go down over the next 20 years. It's not as if these costs are driving the economy to ruin by way of percentages. They are not eating up a greater percentage of the economy.

Stewart:

In the reforms that must go on, it would be very well if government stayed out of the price system and did all the redistributional work they wanted to do by incomes. I apply that to minimum wages, agricultural price supports, marketing boards, and housing. Attempts to solve the problem by dealing in the price system have turned out almost uniformly to be expensive and a tragedy, without solving the problem. Income solutions are much simpler, more straightforward, much less interventionist and more effective.

Taking housing as an example, the cost, in absolute dollar terms, of housing everybody in the country without plunging them into poverty or putting them further into poverty, is a drop in the ocean, compared to what we do now by trying to solve the problem by inducements to build, price subsidies, and rent freezes around the country.

Question:

On behalf of those families who are not designated as poor, do you wish to maintain as a principle, in either the taxation system or the income transfer system, the notion that adults raising dependent children should, in fact, be treated differently than those adults who are not? Would you try to preserve the principle of horizontal equity or would that be discarded as you discard universality? The universal Family Allowance program has, in fact, been a fairly efficient and progressive way of acknowledging the work that parents do in caring for children.

Courchene:

I think all guaranteed annual income schemes would recognize that a two-person family is not the same as a two-person family with two children , and that would be taken into account in setting the benefit levels. I am much happier with the current family allowance system than the old one. Under the federal tax system, I think you start taxing back family allowance if one person earns $50,000 income. If two earners each have $49,000, they keep the family allowance. There is some lack of horizontal equity if you view it as a family. This horizontal equity is getting distorted at the high end, even though it plays a very important role for lower income people. We cannot afford non-taxable, universal family allowance.

Stewart:

I should point out, reluctantly, that it is possible to play all kinds of marginal games in a guaranteed annual income structure. The trouble, once you get away from a scheme that is pure income guarantees, universally taxed back, is that you begin to pay incentives for particular social objectives. You begin to fall into the same trap we are now in of having elaborated so many objectives in so many instruments, that we have no idea of what they do, where, when and how.

Question:

The present tax system distorts and destroys any potential for horizontal equity. I think with the computer age, and a little more creativity rather than bureaucratic resistance, we could see much more creative ways of ensuring that families with similar incomes, regardless of how those incomes are constituted, could receive a fair, just and equitable tax structure and rate, which would draw taxes back from them at the same rates and benefit them under the same plans. I would like some feedback.

Courchene:

There are two basic ways to make taxing a family the same as taxing two individuals. One is to have income splitting. The other is to have a single tax rate. Those are the two ways that governments could handle the issue you raised, but that was only part of the question. I will let the others handle the rest.

Stewart:

The other struggle, recently, to move individual taxation systems, is to get away from sexist kinds of distinctions so that it is invulnerable to charges of benefitting or causing behaviourial problems. We have tried for years to avoid and do away with income splitting. People still do it, but it has been against the law in Canada. It is true that ratifying income splitting in certain circumstances would be one way to deal with your issue.

Question:

What is the future for the native population that fall into the social envelope, probably 100%? How do you propose to deal with native issues like unemployment and native women?

Hunsley:

We are talking about guaranteed levels of income being available throughout. That doesn't solve the problem of under-development of the economy in native communities. I think it has to be looked at as an economic issue, but with the underpinning of the kind of income policies we have been speaking to. We are talking about the establishment of an adequate guaranteed annual income which has a base of employment. We think there needs to be a base established and secondarily, even though most economists will argue against the maintenance of a particular level of minimum wage, we have seen what happens when you let the minimum wage go. So we are trying to establish two basic principles which would underscore or underpin a guaranteed income program. One is employment and the other is a notion of adequacy. Then, what we are talking about is moving toward a guaranteed income program one step at a time. In a sense, we have done that with the elderly in Canada. We are just saying the next step is children. Let's do it with children next.

Stewart:

I apologize that I am simply not close enough to what is, of the moment, to be able to make an extrapolation from what the government is now doing and what it's planning to do to native economic and native family developments questions, per se. I may be an idealist. I had hoped that the gradual filling out of the notion of native self-government and the transformation of the present structures of entitlement and grant systems to bands & councils would aim those funds to trigger economic development.

Globalization and competitive pressures are frequently used as the ideological rationale for cutting more than we have to do. I would be dismayed if we were to cut severely in native areas until we've achieved a much more fundamental and propitious outcome than we've so far achieved.

I'm aware in the native housing area, that the capital sums paid without solving the housing problem, are prodigious and silly. There has to be an answer that is not so costly as we now do.

Courchene:

In terms of the future social policy, I argue that they're going to go toward greater selectivity or adjustment, greater decentralization, and greater private sector participation. All of these apply to the native situation. Paternalism hasn't worked. Moving toward native self-government is a movement in all three directions.

Comment:

With a guaranteed annual income, there could be more options like job-sharing so people could make more personal social choices about where they spend their time.

Question:

In terms of global or line-item budgeting, why are we choosing between health care and day care? Why are corporate subsidies for employment not included?

Courchene:

One advantage of the guaranteed annual income is that Canadians could then make income and lifestyle choices. While the corporate side wasn't mentioned, corporate subsidies should be removed. We won't spend less on social programs, but we can spend smarter by doing more with existing budgets, targeting money to where it is needed most, and by being more efficient and productive.

Question:

How would you advise the Mayor of Regina's task force on overcoming hunger?

Stewart:

Poverty and hunger are not a failure of resources. The mere transfer of income is not the only answer, but it is an answer that provides assurance that a base level of income ensures this need is not a problem. There is an enormous role for volunteers, but this issue is a social and collective obligation, and the answer does not lie with voluntarism.

Courchene:

There is an incredible voluntary sector in Canada with an enormous infrastructure. Some social programs are offset by voluntary programs.

Hunsley:

Hungry children are a problem of family education and income. The proposal of a child tax credit would provide a reasonable level of income for children. City officials can advocate for this.

Food banks and soup kitchens should not be a part of the income security system. Their mandate should be changed to collect and make food available to schools and group homes, not to individuals.

Question:

Has any thought been given to possible problems with the Charter in relation to the legislation, implementation and administration of a guaranteed annual income? Is there a danger society will feel it has done its job simply by issuing a cheque?

Hunsley:

Parents who abuse or neglect their children or who spend money on alcohol instead of food can and should be dealt with through legislation and programming. The Charter may well move us toward a guaranteed annual income by doing away with age as a factor. There will be less distinction between the adult and the child.

Stewart:

In a single-parent family, the first child would be treated as equivalent to a spouse, to raise income level. The courts may accept guidelines from Statistics Canada as to appropriate levels when the issue of children being treated differently is raised. The Court probably won't be deeply involved in social policy.

Question:

Regarding government priorities for unemployment, welfare, education, health and pensions, does government have to borrow from the private sector, which redistributes poverty and creates high interest payments on the debts?

Courchene:

If it is a question of monetizing debt, we have $300 billion debt and about 60% becomes due every three months. All of our debt is instant demand deposit, and we don't have this option.

Question:

While there is a very low rate of child poverty in Sweden, there is a very high tax rate, making it necessary for both parents to work. Sweden has many social programs, but they are almost non-existent for homemakers. In order to benefit from the programs, the wife or mother has to be in the workforce. Comments?

Hunsley:

It is true Sweden has high tax rates, which are part of the trade-off for better social programs. In discussing this with Scandinavians, they agree they have high taxes, but say they have the kind of society they want to have, with little poverty and good services. There is public recognition of the value and support for the system.

Policies in Scandinavia are moving toward giving people a choice in child care. In Finland, for example, parents can choose public sector daycare, which is free, or they can opt to stay at home or make other arrangements and get the equivalent to public welfare. There is recognition of options and the value placed on child care. In Sweden, women are expressing their option to work, knowing they have secure child care.

Participant:

3.5 million Canadian women are full-time homemakers. As a result, most couples live with a lower income level than families where women work in the labour force. There are discrepancies in the tax and social legislation. Laws need to be addressed to give the single-income family equality with the double-income.

Courchene:

One approach is income-splitting, where the total family income can be allocated between the spouses. The alternative is to have one tax rate. We had 10 or 12 tax rates and now we have three. One can argue for a single tax rate, with a higher initial tax credit which would solve the problem.

Question:

Comment on increasingly high mortgage rates as they affect family choices for employment and having children.

Courchene:

Mortgage deductibility may be one solution. However, housing is, in part, driven by world forces. An alternative is to mortgage in real value as a proportion of equity.

Stewart:

There has been a continuous struggle in the tax system over housing. The real and relative costs of housing have gone up sharply relative to income. Housing is a very expensive asset to hold. There are other ways to deal with housing.

One is a development on a guaranteed annual income, called a rent supplement, rather than policies to affect the market, to maintain rent controls and to build houses. We can supplement incomes more cheaply to rent available housing and encourage builders to build in more effective ways. Housing is a separable issue we have to face.

PARENTING TODAY

Panellists: Jim Anglin
Kathy Lynn
Bob Couchman

Question:

There is a need for recreational programs in which the whole family can participate and which do not fragment families. Are there any studies of such programs.

Couchman:

The Canadian Association of Parks and Recreation puts out a journal Together is Better, which has examples of programs around the country. The address can be obtained from municipal parks department offices. They are generally part of the association.

Question:

There is a need to construct educational and recreational events that are inter-generational and can be shared by an extended family.

Answer:

There are quite a number of pilot projects that have been started involving children in the schools and senior's clubs.

Question:

Parents often do not attend or participate in parenting courses because there is too much preaching rather than teaching. Much of the theory taught by experts is not consistent with people's experiences.

Anglin:

In curricula there has to be a combination of the affective along with the cognitive. This is something that is very difficult to do.

Question:

Role modelling in parent education can be is a very useful tool, particularly for teen mothers. How can we make healthy parent role models more accessible - for example how can we channel teen parents to healthy role modelling when it has not been part of their lives? Have day cares been used to teach successful parenting for people like single mothers who do not have time or transportation to attend classes after work?

Lynn:

Project Parent in B.C. brings parents and children together where they can go through a typical day with each other and get ideas from other professionals and parents. Parent drop in centres are also good places for mothers and their pre-school children.

Question:

Why aren't family education programs more of a priority in schools, rather than just being optional subjects?

Couchman:

They should be essential items in schools. Often in schools and universities they are not considered a proper area for scientific study. It is important to have family issues discussed in the schools, streets and everywhere. Many family life programs only reach women. This has to be extended to everyone.

Comment:

We need to model good interpersonal skills in all areas of life, not just good parenting skills.

Question:

As a public health nurse on a reserve I have observed parents struggling to succeed in life and to stay off drugs and alcohol. The community has constructed a project to bring families and parenting together through a day care project. The project brings seniors together with the children for part of the day. When one brings one healthy generation together with another healthy generation the hope is that the third generation will be even better.

Answer:

Public health nurses are often viewed most positively by parents since they are not there to apprehend, or arrest.

Much wonderful parenting education occurs when the public health nurses are weighing children, inoculating children or talking about nutrition, because they are so welcome in the family.

Question:

Family recreation is good, but we need unorganized activities as well to play and be free. Many kinds of family events are just too expensive for many families.

Answer:

The criteria for family recreation programs is that they must be accessible and inexpensive.

Volume

3

REGINA JULY 1989

Symposium

ABOUT

SUR LA

HONORARY CHAIRPERSON:
Her Excellency the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauvé, P.C., C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada

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A Symposium About Families is presented by direction of the Annual Premiers' Conference of 1988.

DOCUMENTS

VOL 3 DELEGATES' WORKSHOPS

FOREWORD

A Symposium About Families was held in Regina, Saskatchewan, July 11 - 14, 1989. It was initiated by the ten Premiers of Canada at their annual conference during August of 1988. The Symposium was cost-shared by the provinces and hosted by Saskatchewan.

Thirty-four plenary speakers and panelists were invited to present information at the Symposium. Topics included Education and Families, Law and Families, Work and Family Life, The Health of our Families, Serving Vulnerable Families, The Family in the Community, Parenting Today, Family Income, Communication With and Within Families, and Canada's Families Today.

Over 750 delegates from across Canada attended the conference and participated in the plenary and panel sessions, the question and answer periods, and the delegates' workshops.

Over 50 percent represented almost 300 non-governmental organizations, including: churches, religious associations and colleges; Indian/native service agencies, bands and associations; family crisis, adoption, childrens aid, youth, teen mother, womens, sexual assault and child care agencies; home economist agencies; home and school associations; schools, school boards and associations, community colleges, technical institutes and educational associations; health associations, home care services, hospitals and nurses associations; alcohol and drug treatment agencies; community-living associations/agencies; seniors associations; police forces; municipal governments; housing agencies; human services professional associations; policy institutes; employment agencies; welfare advocacy; businesses; social development associations; private law firms; multicultural agencies; televisions producers; libraries; performing arts and other individuals and families.

Governmental representation was composed of delegates from agencies dealing with: family, community and social services; employment, labour and human resources; municipal affairs; education and adult education; health; housing; womens' directorates; recreation; agriculture; finance and revenue; alcohol and drug abuse; public service commissions; consumer affairs; transportation; liquor commissions; human rights commissions; multicultural; inter-governmental affairs; rural affairs; executive councils; secretary of state; pension agencies, ombudsman; justice; crown corporations; economic development and business; community event agencies; Indian and native affairs.

Honourary Chairperson of **A Symposium About Families** was Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Jeanne Sauve, P.C. C.C., C.M.M., C.D., Governor General of Canada.

Chairman of the symposium was Mr. Knowlton Nash who was for a decade CBC's Chief Correspondent and Anchor for The National, from November 1978.

PURPOSE OF THE SYMPOSIUM

The purpose of **A Symposium About Families** was to allow governments and others to be exposed to a broad spectrum of views about supporting and strengthening families. It was a forum for diverse perspectives to be shared - for governments and delegates to learn from the experiences of Canadians from other professions, other communities, other regions and other cultures. The symposium was a gathering where people could meet others of similar backgrounds or professions, with whom they might exchange ideas and solutions. The symposium served as an opportunity for delegates to put forward ideas on what issues families face, and what can be done about these.

Changing economics, shifting cultural realities and social forces affect families today in many ways. High technology, affluence, emotional estrangement and social dislocation have all created broadly divergent perspectives on families today.

Increased mobility, declining birthrates, the reduction in support of the extended family and the increase in single parent or blended families have changed our perception of the traditional family unit. Alternate family arrangements have increased and become commonplace. Families are experiencing more separation, divorce and remarriage. There are single parents, childless couples and single households. Families are becoming smaller. Career and economic factors cause children to move away from the larger family network, testing the bonds of the extended and nuclear family. Seniors are an increasing proportion of our population and a "seniors' lifestyle" has been created. More people with physical and mental disabilities are achieving greater independence today in family settings within the community.

Changing and adapting to new circumstances creates stress and difficulty. People rely upon those around them for stable, supportive and loving relationships. We will continue to find stability and support in our families, in whatever form they take.

ORGANIZATION

A Symposium About Families was hosted by the Government of Saskatchewan and arranged by the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services.

Saskatchewan government officials initially met with representatives of the provinces and other interested agencies across Canada to identify the form and content of the symposium. An organizing committee was then struck and work began developing the conference.

The organizing committee was composed of:

Mr. Henry Kutarna, Deputy Minister of Social Services
Dr. Allan Hansen, Assistant Deputy Minister of Social Services
Mr. Dan Perrins, Executive Director of Family Services
Mr. Eric Johansen, Symposium Coordinator
Ms. Lynn Allan, Events Planning Coordinator
Ms. Brenda Szala, Events Planning Coordinator
Mr. Roy Rysavy, Staff Volunteer Coordinator
Mr. Lorne Dunsmore, Program Coordinator
Mr. Alan Gill, Communications

Over 200 volunteer staff from across the social services department and other Saskatchewan departments and agencies were involved in producing the symposium.

Panel Sessions

Persons from across Saskatchewan and Canada arranged for speakers and moderated panel sessions during the symposium.

Education and Families Panel:

Moderator - Diane Gagnon, Secretariat for Family Affairs, Quebec

Selectors - Donna Krawetz, Saskatchewan Education
- Carol Powell-Ariano, Saskatchewan Education
- Rita Archer, Saskatchewan Education

Law and Families Panel:

Moderator - Brian Barrington-Foote, Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Justice
Selector - Betty Ann Pottruff, Saskatchewan Justice

Delegates' Workshops

Work and the Family Panel:

Moderator - Vicki Bales, Director, Family Support, Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
Selectors - Joan Greaves, Saskatchewan Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department
- Linda Dewhirst, Saskatchewan Human Resources, Labour and Employment Department

The Health of Our Families:

Moderator - Stan Sojonky, Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan Health
Selector - Laura Carment, Saskatchewan Health

Serving Vulnerable Families Panel:

Moderator - Steven Rumsey, Public Trustee, Ministry of Attorney General, British Columbia
Selectors - Richard Hazel, Saskatchewan Social Services
- Linda Wrigley, Saskatchewan Social Services

The Family in the Community Panel:

Moderator - Carmen Moir, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community Services, Nova Scotia
Selector - Dave Hedlund, Saskatchewan Social Services
Bob Creasy, Saskatchewan Social Services

Parenting Today Panel:

Moderator - Marie MacDonald, Director, Child and Family Services, P.E.I. Health and Social Services
Selectors - Trudy Usher, Saskatchewan Social Services
- David Rosenbluth, Saskatchewan Social Services

Family Income Panel:

Moderator - Sheila Devine, Asst Deputy Minister, Newfoundland Department of Children and Youth Services
Selector - Sheldon McLeod, Saskatchewan Social Services
Naomi Mellor, Saskatchewan Health

Canada's Families Today Panel:

Moderator - Doris Mae Oulton, Executive Director, Manitoba Women's Directorate
Selector - Brain Rector, Saskatchewan Social Services

Communication With and Within Families Panel:

Moderator - Stan Remple, Deputy Minister, Alberta Family and Social Services
Selector - Lorne Dunsmore, Saskatchewan Social Services

DOCUMENTS

Permanent records of A Symposium About Families were kept and are being made available to the provinces and to requesting delegates.

Because of the amount of information generated by the symposium, the documentation has been divided into three volumes:

Vol 1 SPEAKERS PAPERS,

Vol 2 QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIODS, and

Vol 3 DELEGATES' WORKSHOPS.

Volumes 1 and 3 are being published during August 1989. Volume 2 will be published later, due to needs for amendment and consolidation of material.

A set of the three volumes of A Symposium About Families documentation may be ordered from:

Saskatchewan Social Services
1920 Broad Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3V6

The cost is $20 per set.

GROUP 1 **Facilitator: Alice Mercier**
Recorder: Jocelyne Charest
Translation from French

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- It was agreed that families should be supported - but at what price? To what extent were we prepared to go, in light of domestic violence?

- It was recommended that no type of family be excluded from the definition of a family. Homosexual couples would thus be considered a family.

- It would be interesting to examine the effects of Bill 146 "An Act to Amend the Civil Code of Quebec and other legislation in order to favour economic equality between spouses", which was recently adopted in Quebec (June 22, 1989).

- It would also be interesting to analyze the effect of family migrations.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- It was proposed that the media be used to convey the idea of family.

- Municipalities have a role to play in family policy, because municipal representatives are closer to the people.

- The family must be integrated into the community. Schools must therefore make a contribution through increased participation by administrators and greater parental involvement. Mechanisms must be established to allow the schools to play their part.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- The strategies for dealing with domestic violence must be reviewed. The victims must be helped, of course; but so too must all individuals who needed assistance.

- There are two areas to consider:

  1. Prevention

     We must:

     . denounce violence, and

- educate police officers, Crown attorneys, judges and so on to make them more sensitive to this issue.

2. **Intervention**

   - The problem results from the imbalance of power in the relationship of couples, which stems from sexual inequality. Balance must be re-established and equality recreated.

- Above all else, long-term mechanisms are needed in this area.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- The problem of malnutrition among poor families was stressed.

- We must demonstrate creativity and initiative (for example, by changing the contents of vending machines in schools).

5. EDUCATION AND THE FAMILIES

- We must:

  - determine the Department of Education's responsibility;
  - provide courses on parenting;
  - alter the content of school books to reflect social realities, such as the roles of men and women;
  - provide significant support for preschool education through subsidies and parent training; and
  - use the media to provide preschool education (for example, the program "Passe-partout").

- It was recommended that a nation-wide kindergarten system be established (especially in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, where there is none).

6. LAW AND FAMILIES

- After a brief summary of the reports given during the Symposium, it was pointed out that legislation should better reflect new social realities and take account of such factors as violence.

- For example, in order to make setting support payments easier, the governments should determine the average (or basic) cost of caring for a child.

7. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- We must:

  - adapt services to the working environment in such areas as scheduling and accessibility;
  - create multidisciplinary working groups so that small businesses can participate;
  - offer employee benefits, one of the best ways for a business to retain its employees;
  - ensure that where there are more than a certain number of employees, governments provide certain services or make sure that they are offered; and
  - ensure universal recognition of the principle of wage parity:

    - **equal pay for equal work.**

8. FAMILY INCOME

- People expressed the fear that social programs would be lost; **we must protect the benefits gained.**

- The federal government must review the distribution of family allowances and be **family-oriented.**

- The taxation system gives no consideration to the concept of family.

- Assistance should be directed to the working poor, for example, through a work-income supplement.

- Taxation is the cornerstone of a family policy.

9. COMMUNICATIONS WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- It is as acknowledged that we have no choice but to live with the media and therefore we must educate parents and other adults about media.

- In this context, we must:

  - regulate television broadcasts by requesting greater Canadian content,
  - promote non-violence and eliminate stereotypes.

- The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (C.R.T.C.) should ensure better programming, with greater community content and a greater emphasis on positive news.

- It was stressed that television must be used in a positive manner and that as viewers, parents have a responsibility in this respect.

10. **PARENTING TODAY**

- Parents must be given support through community services.

- There were already many competent organizations working in this field; they must be supported financially.

- The community must support disadvantaged parents. For example, daycare services must be provided.

- Homemakers should also be able to rely on support.

11. Finally, the delegates made some general remarks about family policy.

We should:

. consolidate the gains made by those already working in this field, maximize community participation and make use of the experience of the non-institutional community;
. co-ordinate efforts to support parents;
. promote sexual equality;
. think of the family at every level: recreation, services and so on, especially when decisions are being made; and
. encourage action at the grass-roots, in other words, at the community level.

The delegates also had a few remarks to make about the Symposium:

. They emphasized the quality of the contributions, but also expressed regret that more time had not been set aside to meet the representatives from other provinces so that they could discuss practical issues and exchange points of view.
. They would also have liked a list of delegates from private and provincial organizations to use for reference purposes during the symposium and as a mailing list afterward.

GROUP 2 **Facilitator: Norma Dube**
Recorder: Juliette Charlesbois

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Canada's population is aging, therefore governmental policy will have to ensure adequate income.

- Government policy should address the needs of different cultures and immigrants.

- Government policy should reflect the value of all kinds of families. Only 25% of families are "traditional".

- Government policy should ensure families get the support they need as a result of poverty, family violence, etc. The distribution of services is unequal in our society.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- The native child in a white family needs more support.

- Parents who have children in school need more support in addressing the needs of their children.

- Services have drifted away from children and need to be redirected towards children. e.g. Youth need more than recreation centres to address their needs. The present emphasis is simply to "keep the kids off the street."

- Government funding tends to be fragmented. Consistency of funding and long term funding is needed.

- Attitude change is needed regarding the value of family and children.

- Practical programs are needed for non-traditional families.

- Children need protection.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- New ways to address the issue of family violence are needed. e.g. non-adversarial, non-judgemental, supportive

- Government policy should reflect prevention, education and service.

- Under-reporting, attitudes in the community and the influence of the media need to be addressed.

- While there should be an emphasis on keeping families together (Family Services Act), children should not be put at risk as a result.
- Government policy should deal with the level of violence on television.
- Abuse and violence occurs in all communities, including aboriginal communities, and this should be recognized.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Health is measured through sickness and death in our society. The two main factors are low birth weight and accidents. Poverty is highly associated with these factors. Government policy must work to eliminate child poverty in order to address these health issues.
- Native people need equal access to health services, education, higher income and better housing.
- Government policy and funding has centred on high-tech solutions. More emphasis should be placed on education.
- Health care is a community based issue, yet most funding is directed towards large institutions.
- Government policy must address the issue of sexually-transmitted diseases and AIDS. Young people need preventive and educational programs.
- Mental health issues should be more of a priority. Stress-related health issues affect family relationships and mental health issues often underlie physical problems. The stigma of mental illness and the tendency to medicate or self-medicate need to be addressed.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- The school is a delivery agent of services and values and is an important access point for children.
- The school should be more accessible to native parents and their children.
- Schools and teachers need to be careful as to what values they teach.

6. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Individuals and communities need to become more familiar with the legal system.

- Too many policy issues are settled in the Courts.
- Too many individuals feel intimidated and victimized when they participate in the Court system.

7. **WORK AND FAMILY LIFE**

- The employer should support and acknowledge the needs of the family.
- The employer can play an important role in preventive programs, therefore, government policy should raise the awareness of employers.
- The government should serve as a role model for employers.
- Individuals who receive financial assistance should not have their benefits drastically reduced when they work part-time. Rather, they should be encouraged to take this initiative.
- Labour standards and employee benefit legislation should reflect support and acknowledgement of the needs of the family.

8. **FAMILY INCOME**

- The minimum wage does not meet the poverty level, therefore, a guaranteed family income is needed.
- 25% of the children in Canada live in poverty. Families need adequate housing, social supports and a viable economic base.

9. **COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES**

- The media, particularly television, has a very strong impact on children.
- The connection between violence on television and acts of violence by individuals needs to be recognized.
- Government policy should closely evaluate the relevance of the media.

10. **PARENTING TODAY**

- Parents need to be motivated to seek parent education.
- Government policy should ensure statements and initiatives give parenting a "real" value. e.g. Day care staff and foster parents are poorly paid.

- Other parents should be used as a resource more often.
- More opportunities to learn parenting are needed. The core curriculum in school should include life skills, sexuality, relationships, family violence, etc. The dilemma is that teachers are already over-burdened.

GROUP 3 **Facilitator: Lisette Bedard**
Recorder: Pierre Rouleau
Translation from French

GROUP 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PROPOSALS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FAMILY POLICY

- A family policy should place greater emphasis on the positive aspects of the family, rather than focus solely on the negative aspects.

- A family policy should specifically take account of elderly people.

- A family policy should be clearly distinguished from a population policy. For this reason, the actual situations experienced by families must be given precedence over population development statistics.

- A family policy should include preventive measures as well as solutions to problems encountered by families.

2. PROPOSALS REGARDING CONCRETE MEASURES THAT SHOULD BE INTRODUCED BY GOVERNMENT

- In order to prepare young children for the family situations and responsibilities that they will likely encounter, departments of education should make home economics courses mandatory.

- Governments should promote and fund adult and parent training.

- Governments should recognize and give greater consideration to the expertise of volunteer groups working in the field and provide them with financial support.

- Governments should give financial assistance to community organizations implementing and developing measures to prevent family violence.

- Governments should implement and provide mediation services aimed at resolving problems arising from separation and divorce, for both children and adults.

- In schools, physical education classes should not focus solely on sports, but also on physical and mental health throughout life.

- Governments should support families taking care of relatives by providing temporary assistance, relief services, and so on.
- The involvement of both parents in education should be encouraged through various means.
- Education curriculums should reflect the different family models present in today's society.
- When awarding student loans and grants, all forms of discrimination against families should be eliminated by taking into account the current income of the parents rather than their assets.
- Television is a powerful medium that should be used to promote the family, in a manner similar to the PARTICIPaction advertising, for example.
- With respect to income, governments should adopt measures to support low-income families, particularly one-parent families and single women between the ages of fifty [?] and sixty-five, rather than gradually withdraw from social programs.
- Governments should endeavour to eliminate the inequities of the tax system with respect to families.
- All Canadian families should be assured a guaranteed minimum income.
- Following the birth of a child, parents should qualify for guaranteed parental leave and the mother should be guaranteed an income equal to ninety percent of her salary, for the duration of her maternity leave.

GROUP 4 Facilitator: Dr. Gail Babcock
Recorder: Bryan Clark

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- It was felt by delegates that some of our taxation structures need to be revisited. The basic assumption is that adequate income levels are required before families can function effectively and efficiently.

- Social programs are required as safety nets and cannot be subject to financial cuts.

- Family violence needs further attention as its extent is underestimated and certainly it is a detriment to family functioning as a whole.

- In this vein, supportive services must be protected from additional financial cuts.

- Changes to the tax structure are required. Tax credits should be a mechanism to provide equity for lower income families.

- Abuse of the present social welfare and service systems occurs; new structures are required to prevent this as well as closer screening before benefits are provided.

- Incentives are required to help correct and prevent abuse by welfare recipients instead of the present mechanism which magnifies abuse.

- Housing programs are required which provide adequate housing for poor families. An example would be to provide for a sweat equity factor which would establish the poor family's credibility with the regular banking system which, at present, does not want to deal with poor clients.

  - Apparently there is some material from England where programs similar to this one are already under way.

- G.A.I. (Guaranteed Annual Income) was felt by some of the delegates to be a solution towards these problems.

- It was noted by other delegates that the abuse of the welfare system is not as large an issue as it is sometimes made out to be.

- Before we can deal with abuse, adequate rates must be in place so that the family can deal with day-to-day needs.

2. FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY

- Question raised: Why must the victims of family violence or abuse be forced to leave their homes? The laws may require changing to allow for the removal of the abuser, leaving the victim at home, with minimal disruption for the children.

- Question raised: We may be able to move the abused but what do we do with them then? It is felt that the family is safer if they are moved and have more access to the multi-disciplinary services required.

- The recommendation was that supportive resources for victims of family violence and abuse should be located within one structure, and better coordinated than at present.

- Rural Saskatchewan requires coterminous boundaries to help in the referral and obtaining of appropriate services for social services clientele. Also the immediacy of services is an issue.

- Co-ordination between departments which offer the various supportive services must be enhanced as tremendous gaps exist. This has to be addressed.

- Governments can and should be involved in the encouragement of communities to provide resources; they should not put blocks in the way of communities developing or identifying resources and services required.

- Money is not always the issue. Clearly the moral support and encouragement of government can be the key to get communities motivated sufficiently to develop their own support services.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Again the comment was made about batterers having to be removed from the home. However, resources must be made available to the abuser.

- Sexual abuse is a crime and must be treated as such. Judicial systems, in particular judges, must be accountable for their decisions.

- Penalties are not severe enough for perpetrators.

- We need to listen and learn from the native community on their concepts of families. Their concepts may work very well in rural settings, however, we acknowledge there may be some difficulties in the urban community.

- Recent immigrants into Canada have a tendency to use their own community and culture as a method of support in the absence of their natural family. This is an issue perhaps we should look at, recognizing the mobility of our society and the unavailability of our natural families as supports.

- We need to redevelop the sense of community.

- The concept of extended family needs to be supported by government and the value of it need to be pointed out and promoted by government.

- Presently the individual's energies are absorbed almost totally in the need just to survive. The tax structure should be amended in a variety of areas, and should allow credit systems for those individuals who are trying to maintain family contact.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- We should make use of senior citizens within our community. Even if they are not grandparents, they could be "adoptive" grandparents. The advantage would be that our children, could become familiar with, comfortable with and learn from our older population.

- We need a commitment to the extended family. It is impossible to develop a government policy which will correct this. This is an issue that needs to come from the community.

- Once a community has assessed its own needs and has developed its goals, then government should support and facilitate the accomplishment of these goals. It is not always a case of asking for more money.

- As simple an issue as the location of senior citizens' homes has an impact on the relationship of senior citizens to the community. For example, for financial reasons, senior citizens homes are often located all in one spot.

- Home support programs definitely need to be expanded and maintained to help people remain in their own homes.

- Decent wages for homemakers are required.

- We need to focus on community health issues. This will help reduce the need for large institutions such as hospitals and nursing homes. Prevention is the key word.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- We need more integration of the school system with community needs, for example, in dealing with the problem of latchkey children.
- Co-ordination between the education system and social services in the broadest sense is required.
- Some feel the education system should become less involved in family issues and return to educating.
- Teachers need to become more integrated in a role of being both educators and social workers. They are the kingpin in identifying a variety of our social needs and future directions.
- The early identification of problems is necessary as a preventive tool. This can only be done if social workers are involved in the education system at the elementary levels.
- We must integrate social workers into the school system.
- It is the same with child day care. We need to be able to intervene with children at an earlier age. A social work component should be added to the program.
- Teachers need to be helped or trained to make appropriate and adequate referrals.
- We need to acknowledge, as a society, the skills and the good job the teachers have done in education.
- Information from these sessions needs to be sent to all school trustees so that they can see what issues and what credits in the system are being identified by other professions.
- It was acknowledged by two of the participants that having social workers within the school system has had positive effects, as they have witnessed the end results.
- We require a general review of the various school systems within the provinces and Canada in order that good ideas can be shared. Some examples were provided os Saskatchewan programs.

-Family life education is required and it was recommended by this group that it should be an mandatory and be provided to children at an early age.

6. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- Governments are to be encouraged to provide a balance between work life and family life. Demands at work sometimes overrule and interfere with issues at home.
- We definitely need to look at the issue of early retirement. Whereas at present we are focused on money issues, we need to pay attention to the psychological problems created when an individual retires early.
- We must take note of the impact of early retirement upon the volunteer sector. Often it is these individuals and their spouses who have been active in voluntary areas. On early retirement, these people become unavailable as they travel more. This has not yet been identified and it is a major concern.
- Government's expectation is for more volunteerism and not less; we must become aware of demands and the implications this may have on those who are still working.
- It can be quite a shock after 30 years of paid work for a person to become a volunteer and to find that volunteer work is unacknowledged. There needs to be a better system to acknowledge this work.
- We should exercise caution regarding day care in the workplace. This is a good idea for some people, but not necessarily the answer for all. We should not see this as the utopian answer to all the problems of working parents.
- Employment equity should be mandatory.
- Employers should ensure the ability to job-share.
- Employers should recognize the need for flexible hours.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Families are varied and complex, and cannot be dealt with in a single service mode. Therefore, the need to have services as co-ordinated as possible or available at a "family service centre" is desirable.
- The Unified Family Court System has been found to be, and seems to be, the best Court system to deal with family issues. Examples of success in Ontario and Saskatchewan were provided; however, concern was expressed regarding the possible demise of Unified Family Courts.

- Another reference was made to the need to educate judges, not only in the area of family law, but also to maintain an ongoing update process.
- The rights of men, women, children and grandparents need to be equalized in custody cases.
- The issue of forced charging in the area of family violence needs to be revisited. This would require a review of the Criminal Code of Canada.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Lifestyle advertising on television and in other media needs to be restricted, for example, liquor advertising.
- The media needs to provide information that is accurate and appropriate. For example, the media portrays by far the majority of abuse as being performed by strangers. We know this to be inaccurate.
- The use of statistics needs to be balanced. For example, "30% of people are divorced" - this could be stated as " 70% of people are happily married."
- Governments need to be more selective and cautious in the study of programs before they throw their support behind them. They should consult with communities before promoting particular concerns.
- It was suggested that there could be an agency to monitor all public policy and how it affects the family. This agency could look at short, as well as long-term, issues.
- Public service advertising could be increased. This a required element in Canadian broadcasting,but the contents should be realistic.
- There should be close monitoring of the direct and indirect impact and influence of the media on issues.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- The Ontario Social Assistance Commission Hearing has included as one of its recommendations a G.A.I. (Guaranteed Annual Income).
- The comment was made again that if Government truly believes in dealing with poverty, it must show it in its taxation structure.
- Economic dignity is essential.

- There must be an acknowledgement of the single parent family and the issues that surround it, such as being on social assistance and the need to go out and look for work.
- There should be an acknowledgement of the periodic and temporary crises within families which may require financial help that is considered impractical by the current assistance system.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We need to ensure quality training for parent educators.
- We need to encourage the formal information and learning process via the natural learning process which we assume to exist.
- We need to educate new immigrants to Canada as to what is acceptable behaviour in our society and what is not. This should be done as part of the granting of citizenship. It was felt this could be done without interfering with differing cultural backgrounds.
- It is necessary to address all the educational needs of all members of immigrant families rather than focusing on the head of the household only. This needs to be done immediately immigrants arrive, and not left for two years.
- Within Saskatchewan, there are no resources which deal with the family as a whole. Services are segmented, with various age groups going to different agencies. This can mean that a family is going to three different agencies. Services should be brought together in an holistic approach.
- The concept of community service centres was highly recommended.
- Preventive services in every area were felt to be the only way we are going to deal with family crisis.
- As a society, we must come to grips with the new definitions of family and accept much broader definitions than in the past, for example, that of the "nuclear family". We have clearly bypassed that stage.
- The focus should be on what is happening within the family, rather than trying to define what is a family.

These points were reviewed with the group at the close of the session. All were in agreement and the general discussion was excellent. Comments were made regarding the need to have much more time to discuss these items. Some of the potential points were not fully developed because of the lack of time.

GROUP 5 **Facilitator: Ken Cameron**
Recorder: Trudy Usher

The participants of this workshop deviated from the established panel presentations and spoke to three additional topics - Minority Groups, Parental Support and Communication.

[1] Poverty has implications for all families not just those who personally suffer from it.

[2] Although defining "the family" could be beneficial for programming it is more effective to develop policies of support rather than risk getting lost in the emotional debate of what constitutes a family.

[3] Support services must be provided without stigma, and should be inclusive, not exclusive.

[4] To progress, a partnership is needed between government, business and the community.

[5] Interdepartmental linkages are essential, integration of disciplines is a political decision, which must start at senior levels and be accountable.

[6] Governments, communities and community organizations must priorize needs and responses to make the best use of scarce resources.

[7] Networking is required to build upon positive programming, and avoid duplication. Funding to support this activity is desired.

[8] Improved communication must be sought at all levels, between organizations, government and business.

[9] It is essential that accurate, relevant research be undertaken upon which program development can be founded.

[10] Long-term community planning with ongoing evaluation and feedback is required to enable relevant program development.

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- The positives are often missed as the negatives are stressed; for example, of single parents, blended families, etc.

- It is a mistake to assume that all one parent families have above average problems.

- We must create a greater awareness and receptivity of the diversity and potential of families in Canada.

2. MINORITY GROUPS

- Stressing the concept of the "native" family results in problems for integration.
- Native Canadians and other minority groups may gravitate to poverty areas and groups to gain a sense of belonging and friendship, rather than due to poor economic circumstances.
- We must place greater emphasis on acceptance, relationships and increasing public knowledge rather than stressing supports needed by the minority groups.
- We must increase opportunities for multi-cultural events and celebrations to develop increased understanding between groups.

3. PARENTAL SUPPORT

- Opportunities for respite for parents are required.
- Recognize and provide services to those who can make the transition to full independence.
- Many personal supports are not utilized in the community; for example, child to child, youth to youth, parent to parent and grandparents.
- Support must be provided without stigma (schools, churches, community programs).
- Greater use of the retired and grandparents in support roles, utilizing their experience and knowledge. However such volunteers must receive training and support.
- There is a need for national and provincial child care policies to ensure high quality environments, available to all families at reasonable costs and geographic locations.

4. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Increased funding is requested for community programs.
- The community should be consulted to determine what residents want for early intervention and prevention.
- Churches are encouraged to fulfil their potential in providing non-denominational support services to the community; for example, drop-in family support.

- Communities must establish linkages within their own boundaries and to outside agencies.
- Proposals for funding need to be politically attractive as a political will is required to fulfil the request.
- Community organizations and government must continually priorize their activities.
- Government and communities need to develop inter-generational recreation that is affordable and enjoyable rather than being based upon specific skill development.
- Competent research is needed which will provide a sound basis for new initiatives.

5. COMMUNICATION

- Increased use of Family Allowance inserts should be used to communicate with families across Canada.
- Community and provincial clearinghouses of information are needed.
- Network funding is essential to agencies to maintain strength and relevance of their organizations.
- Inter-departmental linkage is essential
- Integration of disciplines and networking must start at senior levels to establish and maintain accountability.
- Policies and programs must be developed with Community input.
- Networking can be frustrating if needs are continually identified but never met. Community input and priorization is essential with recognition that not all needs can immediately be met.
- Information provided by governments or organizations make assumptions as to peoples ability and desire to read. Information that is not easily read is useless. Public information should be reviewed as to accuracy, brevity and quality of content.
- There is a need to look to more effective ways for governments and communities to communicate.
- Information for children should be developed to inform and prepare the child not to scare them.

- Cabinet ministers and MLA's should look to more effective ways of communicating with their electorate.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Employment and retraining programs are important in avoiding or alleviating family problems.

- Family and community initiatives should be brought to the workplace. There is a need to sensitize and seek greater involvement of the business community in family related issues.

- Poverty is the most devastating factor affecting families, increase in the minimum wage is required.

- Businesses must recognize and be open to changing values not simply the family versus work and profit but that adding family supports may increase long range profits through such factors as a stable workforce.

- Employees are afraid to put forward suggestions for family supports as they are fearful of losing their job in what is perceived to be a throwaway society.

- Employers should seek input from employees into the development of rules and resource management, e.g. more flexible use of time, benefit packages can result in greater employee productivity.

- The availability of quality child care is essential to a parents productivity in the labour force.

7. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Violence in the family, spouse to spouse, parent to child or child to child is totally unacceptable.

- child care services are urgently required in Transition Homes to address the needs of seriously troubled children and their mothers.

- There is strong support for the child to remain in the home if possible with treatment being provided within the family setting.

- Removal of the abuser from the home is preferable to the child victim, and non-abusing parent being relocated.

- The services as provided by Unified Family Court are essential to the well-being of families experiencing separation/divorce.

8. FAMILY INCOME

- Poverty is devastating to families and is the most pressing issue affecting families. Unless this is addressed other initiatives are not likely to be successful.
- Welfare payments should be increased so families do not have to depend upon charity, or food banks, for their basic needs.
- The minimum wage should be increased so that "getting off" welfare becomes a more attractive option and possibility.

GROUP 6 (Bilingual) — Facilitator: Georges C. Savard
Recorder: Francine O'Leary

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- We should give the elderly the opportunity to make choices, and should offer them different living arrangements since they are not as physically weak as in the past in their older years.

- We must consult with the elderly about the services they want and need.

- We must validate the aspirations of elderly people to be a part of the work force.

- We should give more opportunities to people 55 and over who are looking for a job.

- Government should help people who have to reorient their skills because of changing technology.

- There should be the opportunity for people who have been unemployed for many years to update their skills.

- Employers should give more flexibility to mothers and fathers in the work force, and keep in mind the different family types.

- If we want to encourage women to have more children, we should not publicize the decreasing birth rate by looking back to the past when women stayed at home. We should look for alternatives that enable a woman to work and to raise a family. Do not go back to the past.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- We should broaden the self-help "connections" program to help people within extended families and help the community help itself.

- We must find something to replace the family support that a lot of families are lacking, by encouraging contact with the community and with different groups. We must encourage the development of the community.

- We should focus on prevention in mental health, without giving up our responsibilities for those suffering from mental problems. Prevention could be a way to prevent future expenses or cost.

- We must educate people to handle different life crisis situations. People need to know how and need a model they can follow.

- Services must be provided to take account of people living away from big centres of population.

- In the media, governmental advertising could play a great role by showing a variety of people of different ages, ethnic groups, and all broad descriptions, and images of different family types. Models are important.

- We should be encouraging inter-agency cooperation and the setting of common goals and strategies.

- There should be recognition of and better treatment of non-governmental agencies by the government.

- The Department of Social Services should work more with non-government agencies.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- The emphasis should be on treating the abuser in order to break the cycle of abuse and violence.

- Integrated programs are required.

- Treatments should focus on a whole family treatment and not separate the family unit in the course of treatment.

- We should be teaching good communication skills.

- We need to help people recognize that anger is human. They need tools to learn how to cope with anger, these should be made available through the media.

- More use should be made of "safe houses" - networks of private homes to shelter victims of family violence.

- We should provide services for battered men so that they feel recognized, and that their problems will be dealt with.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- We must increase the allocation of food for poor families.

- We need more education on food budgeting and nutrition. This should be easy to understand.

- We must address the problem of finding a balance between the available technology and the actual medical and health needs of people.

- More has to be done on sex education. We must be able to reach people, and make the message:
  - accessible;
  - considerate of different needs;
  - offer pre-natal information;
  - * speak more clearly about sex education - really communicate the message;
  - we must put more emphasis on health information for older people;
  - give more health tips promotion;
  - emphasize life skills;
  - focus on specific health issues.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- We should be teaching parenting skills in the school system.

- We should be teaching family life education in school, and give certificates as a recognition it is an important subject.

- Family life preparation courses should be required to obtain a marriage license. Information should emphasize HOW and should be promoted through advertising (T.V. commercials, videos). It should be accessible to everyone, and recognize those who may have specific needs or problems and ensure they have access to this information.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- We must adjust to the changes in the workplace and the needs of workers with family responsibilities.

- There is a need for Employee Assistance Programs, and government should encourage employers and employee groups to provide these, provide assistance and endorse the efforts of employers.

- There is a need to examine the situations of employees in small businesses.

- It was recognised that it may not be easy for small businesses to provide Employee Assistance Programs, but that they still have a role to play. Government should support small business in this (e.g. in providing maternity leave).

- It was suggested that the recommendations of the 1987 Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council report 'WORKERS WITH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES IN A CHANGING SOCIETY: WHO CARES?' be adopted.

- Organizations should offer flexibility in their opening hours, and make services available after regular hours.

- Government should introduce a building code which requires that businesses with more than a certain number of employees should provide on-site day care services. This should be a Provincial Initiative.

- There is a need for after school programs. Something has to be done in the schools or in community facilities.

- There should be more flexibility in school rules and arrangements.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Legal services should be available for victims and their families.

- There should be services which could provide an understanding of the legal process for people who have to go through it.

- It should be a requirement that people seeking divorce or custody go through mediation before going to court - this could even lower future costs.

- The legal system should look at ways of helping people to keep up with their parental responsibilities after a marriage breakdown, etc.

- The courts should recognize handicapped people and children as credible witnesses.

- The legal system should be concerned with finding ways to help children find stability in their life.

8. COMMUNICATIONS WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- The media has an important role in making people more accepting of different types of families and in providing positive role models.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- There should be more flexibility in income tax deductions for families.

- Government should consider people's parental responsibilities as a principle in establishing taxation.
- Government should reform the Income Tax Act by taking account of all families types.
- Business should be more heavily taxed for a better balance of tax revenues between individuals and businesses.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We should be looking for ways to facilitate better parenting through education, the media, etc.

FINAL COMMENTS

- Policy makers should determine what is appropriate for provincial or federal policies to help families.
- Small businesses as well as big businesses, all of us, have to take responsibility in family matters. Families are a universal concern.
- It is important to have a Strong Voice to speak for families.
- The Prime Minister should assume the responsibility in implementing a family policy or entrust a minister who has authority over the different departments involved.

Groups 7 & 12 **Facilitator: Donna Wood**
Recorder: Deborah Bryck

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- There should be no one definition of a family. It should be broad and evolutionary.
- Legislation and policy should be written in such a way that the family is the central feature.
- The needs of native families should be addressed when writing and designing policy.
- Efforts must be made to sensitize society to focus on the family.
- We should not lose sight of the fact that the traditional family still plays an important role in Canadian society.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Families need to be empowered. Policies are required that include the needs of families.
- Churches should be included as a resource to families - although they need to broaden their definition of the family.
- Communities must be involved in determining what they see as the needs of the family.
- The development of cities, towns, homes and services should be by multi-aged groupings with day care services and other services that meet the needs of families in each community.
- Prisons need to be developed to resemble families and communities to ensure that inmates do not lose the sense of family and community.
- We should decentralize services by bringing them back to the communities.
- Children need to be central in the development of policy regarding the family.
- Government services need to be better coordinated and central to the community.
- Native families require the structuring of functional communities.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Judges need to be better informed regarding family issues.
- There is a dark side to families - they can be dangerous, hurtful and abusive. We must be aware of this in order to ensure that we recognize when this happens and are available to assist when necessary.
- We should study successful native communities to use as a model for further development.
- There has been an increase in services for abused/abusive families in recent years, but we are in no way near to meeting the needs of all damaged families.
- Violence is a societal issue. We need to act in a preventative manner by teaching children non-violent solutions to problem-solving.
- Efforts must be made to break the cycle of violence.
- We must empower day care workers and teachers so that they can act as positive role models and be able to instruct children in non-violent ways.
- All parents should be offered the opportunity to attend parenting classes.
- Government must make it illegal to use corporal (physical) punishment and provide necessary supports and alternatives to parents to assist them in not hitting their children.
- Government must help people incarcerated for sexual offences by providing education and treatment.
- An adequate income must be made available to all families to reduce family conflict.
- There must be appropriate male role models in day care centres.
- There must be direct consequences for men who use violence.

4. HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Health for families must be promoted and integrated throughout all our services.
- We must develop a clear and concise social policy for this country that includes the health needs of all families.

- We must commit more resources to research and preventative services. The positive results are obvious from the anti-smoking campaign.

- Government should make resources available to families to enable them to attain and maintain a healthy living style (food, etc.).

- Families require adequate income to purchase nourishing food rather than developing a reliance on poor-quality food available through food banks.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Families are primarily responsible for educating their children. Schools offer only a small portion of what children need to learn.

- Governments, communities and families must support schools in broadening the scope of education. Schools should be accessible to the whole family to meet a variety of needs.

- Home and School Associations should be involved in more than bake sales; they should be involved in policy and act in a more political way.

- Education structure needs to change to incorporate an integrated age model with learner centres and peer teaching. This builds a sense of community within the classroom.

- We must change the education system so that it will reflect a sense of community rather than an individualist thrust.

- We must recognize that the reality is such that many young girls are having babies. Child care and parenting should be taught, demonstrated and practised in the classroom.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- The socialization process must change so that families, not women, are required to juggle work and family life.

- Employers must be sensitized to the fact that men also have to be available to meet family obligations.

- If families are paramount, then society must adjust the productivity/work ethic to reflect the needs of the family rather than considering productivity the number one goal.

- There must be equity for parents (not just for women) in the workplace.

- Business needs to internalize the costs of working families.
- Business could provide social services including day care services which have already been shown to have a tremendous positive impact on business and families.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is not supportive of families and should be amended to recognize families.
- Policy makers must make the laws and reverse the current trend of courts making laws regarding the family.
- Laws must be made by society; not by the court system.
- Governments must grapple with such issues as reproduction technology. Communities should be represented on the Royal Commission.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN THE FAMILY

- Government needs to promote diversity in the media.
- Government should promote the C.B.C. (even though it may not always be objective).
- We should use television to promote positive living styles.
- The National Film Board could be encouraged to promote programming on health families.
- Families should be guided in using television as an educational tool.
- Knowledge networks should be made accessible on regular television (not just cable).

9. FAMILY INCOME

- More research is required to determine the feasibility of a guaranteed annual income.
- We should look at alternatives to a guaranteed annual income.
- Government should eliminate the numerous poverty lines because they are arbitrary measures that can be used to show that poor families are not poor.

- We must empower families to help themselves by giving them the tools to be self-sufficient.

- All levels of government should work with churches and other community agencies to help families.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- Television could be used to promote positive parenting.

- Schools should play a greater role in teaching parenting.

- Parents need positive reinforcement and feedback to keep going in a positive way.

11. GENERAL COMMENTS

- Solutions that worked in the past are not always the solutions for the present. We must be open to creative solutions for today's families.

- This Symposium focussed on employed families. The next Symposium should focus on families that cannot find jobs; families that must face the world while unemployed, untrained and many times, dysfunctional.

- We need to hear some concrete plans from the Premiers that will address what has been brought forward.

- Poverty in families is an over-riding concern throughout and must be addressed.

GROUP 8 **Facilitator: Karen Cohl**
Recorder: Donna P. Young

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- The sessions focused on statistics. There is a need for more descriptive discussions of the issues.

- There is a need to look across government departments to review policies which effect families. Financial, educational and health programs must be assessed to determine the impact on the family.

- A greater focus on rural families is critical. Current studies address the larger urban centres and are not representative of rural populations. Northern, agricultural, fishing communities are not considered as a priority.

- Some studies seem to focus on the ethnic population. The ethnic population distribution is not representative of many areas in Canada as it is the larger cities that have the higher members of different ethnic groups.

- The changes in families today are not necessarily crisis situations and should be resolved with a planned approach.

- Not all children have an equal start in life. A greater need exists for early intervention to assist children from a disadvantaged environment.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- School systems should play a greater role in the community. Educational buildings should be used more effectively for daycare, evening functions, recreational activities and adult educational programs. School staff and the educational system need to encourage and support parent involvement in the educational process, school programs and extra curricular activities.

- Governments, parents, and communities should focus on the needs of the child when determining child care arrangements rather than the convenience for the parent. There are benefits for children in a day care facility are not available in a school setting.

- Community groups need to be active in their pursuit of resources in the community. Schools, churches, recreational programs and services may be accessed.

- Community groups need to be innovative and proceed with initiatives to support families. It is not necessary for communities to wait for government policies to provide directives.

- An observation was made that there is a need for an integrated family policy to provide over-all direction. However, communities should contribute and be active participants by bringing their ideas and recommendations forward to their provincial governments.

- There is a defined need for all people to become involved in the growth and development of the services in their community. Those communities with low-income families can begin by developing groups around smaller, more specific issues. The group gains confidence and momentum and is better equipped to handle future projects, problems and issues.

- Utilizing the resources within the community supports individuals in developing leadership skills. These leadership skills can then be used to organize people in problem solving and service development. Outside experts are not necessarily the most effective method to problem solving.

- The symposium sessions should have focused more on poverty and hunger. There needed to be discussion on how communities can deal with these issues. It is difficult to get low income families to develop groups to help themselves. There is a need to provide communities with development people to assist low income communities to organize groups and draw on strengths of individuals within the community.

- A great deal of information now exists on family issues. This information needs to be centralized and made available to the public.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- There was disagreement with the approach of dealing with violence by utilizing state intervention, such as the enforcement system. Delegates would have preferred Canadian statistics rather than American ones.

- A focus on community supports was preferrable to state intervention.

- The need for transition homes and their importance was determined. The need to assess other approaches in providing help to battered wives was identified.

- The Justice System and the problems within the system that occur in Saskatchewan and other provinces was noted.

- There was support for the concept of having the man leave the home environment in battering situations. This would reduce the family's stress. A need to act more quickly to protect the victim and the children, was stated.

- An observation made was that there was no discussion of violence to individuals with disabilities, or of men battered by women. A need to expand ideas and approaches to deal with all groups was discussed.

4. HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Healthy lifestyles are feasible for moderate income families, but difficult for the low income family. Low income families may not have the financial resources needed for equipment, materials for programs and activities. Peer pressure to participate in activities can create stress in the disadvantaged family.

- Families with a disabled member experience greater stresses and are limited in their ability to be actively involved in the community.

- Families that are able to access inexpensive, free activities within their community experience a healthier lifestyle. Families need the opportunity to identify what they can do to improve their life in an affordable way. Increased publicity of low cost, free, and accessible activities is needed.

- Poverty is not good for the health of individuals. Consideration of increasing the financial means of families is critical. One method discussed was through a Guaranteed Annual Income to families.

- Government cannot afford to pay for the healthy lifestyle that is beyond the financial means of many families.

- Low income families have difficulty ensuring a healthy diet.

- Government services and financial programs need to be publicized, rather than waiting for people to ask, as is the current procedure. Finances need to be used to advertise available services, rather than promoting government achievements.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Problems exist in the building of links between schools and families who need support. People are reluctant to approach schools for needed assistance and support.

- Teachers must receive community development training. They need the necessary skills to work with parents within the community setting.

- The teaching profession has changed. Programs and services that were once associated with the school system are deteriorating or no longer exist. Teachers are less willing to volunteer their services.

- Parent - teacher associations have limited involvement of immigrant and low income families. There is a need to encourage this involvement.

- There needs to be a defined role for the educational system in the community. There needs to be a broader role with teacher involvement. Improved teacher training and compensation is requested to support and encourage teacher participation in this expanded role.

- Child (Day) Care Services were not adequately discussed in this conference. Parents should have an important role in child care services for their children. There was a fear expressed that the same mistakes could be made in the child care system as was made in the education system.

- There is a need for an increase in the numbers of field staff in health and education programs. The increase in staff is necessary for the education and promotion of healthy lifestyles for families. A reduction in health care services could be realized over the long term as lifestyles improve.

- Training for teachers and nurses has become more costly as university programs have replaced practical, experience-based training programs.

- Schools must be accessible to the handicapped child. It was stated that not all school divisions are prepared to be easily accessed by children who are disabled.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- On-site day care is good in theory but has logistical problems. The school-age children who need to remain in their community to attend schools are not necessarily served well by on-site care. Small communities and pre-school children are best served by on-site care.

- Increased child care spaces, flexible systems and child care choices need to be developed for parents.

- The needs of the child must emphasized when developing child care services.

- Rural child care is very important. Children are at risk on farms while the parents are working.

- Some cities' zoning laws do not allow for child care centres and home development. Municipalities should address this problem and need to be supportive of child care services.

- Portable benefits and pensions for employers are necessary due to the mobile workforce.

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) should address a broader range of issues beyond alcohol and drug abuse. Other difficulties include stress, child care needs, financial problems, marriage and family concerns. Companies that have EAP should be encouraged to provide referral services to ensure the quality of that service.

- There is a need for more policies and programs which allow mothers to participate more fully in the work place. Employers need to be more flexible with work arrangements. Employers need to look at the provisions of child care and other services for families.

- Longer maternity leave or more infant child care services are necessary to support women returning to work.

- **There is a need for an interim step beyond the symposium. A group is needed to synthesize the material, to identify common themes and to make recommendations.**

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The use of community resources, both formal and informal, such as churches, the Education System, Health and Social Services should be used as an alternative to the legal system to assist and support families.

- The Bill relating to the rights of the mentally disabled which was passed in Saskatchewan is a very positive step.

- There is support for using mediation among family members as opposed to the courts in resolving family disputes. Standards for mediators are needed. However, there is a concern for overstandardizing. Mediators should be using community volunteers from churches, parents and support flexibility in the process.

- The enforcement of financial family support by the absent parent is necessary. Legislation in BC, Alberta, and Manitoba is positive. Interprovincial co-operation is necessary in supporting and enforcing legislation.

- The law and the legislation can effect families differently and must be examined under the Charter of Rights. The law must ensure that people are treated fairly and compensated adequately. One's marital status should not be the basis for developing policies and legislation. The needs of the individual must be considered.

- Sexuality should not be the basis for determining family policies and legislation. The individual situation rather than stereotypes should be considered.

8. COMMUNICATION AND FAMILIES

- The reasons for increased television viewing need to be assessed. Is it due to increased workplace demands, stress, lack of recreational services in the community?

- Television can be used to stimulate thought and discussion in the family, or to avoid communication with others in family.

- Education channels should be included as a free service to assist low income families rather than being a part of "pay" T.V. services.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Many of the social problems of families and individuals are rooted in poverty or insufficient income. Governments should be looking at the concept of a Guaranteed Annual Income. The 'Transitions' report from Ontario recommends increased benefit levels for social welfare clients, particularly in housing.

- Families need to improve money management skills. High School students need instruction in money management skills and family life education, as part of the school curriculum.

- Money management is difficult for everyone so let us be realistic in our expectations of low income families.

- There is a need to educate people about the available choices and how economic decisions affect social policy and the interrelationships between these choices.

- Corporations should accept social responsibility for the impact their business has on environmental and worker stress, and should contribute to the costs associated with dealing with these problems and issues.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- Low income families need to have parenting support programs and services available at minimal or no cost. Child care should be made available.

- Support programs should be accessible to parents and must consider parents' needs in order to encourage their attendance. Economics and interests must be considered.

- Parents may not attend support programs due to the stigma attached to a "parenting program".

GENERAL COMMENTS

- The symposium has made a good start at identifying problems and issues. There has been a mix of broad and detailed analysis. However, we are unable to use information at this point to develop comprehensive policies or determine future direction.

- Some delegates would have preferred to hear more native speakers. A symposium on native families was suggested, as many issues are different.

- Training on cross-cultural understanding is needed, especially for people in the helping professionals.

- A recommendation was made that a summary of the delegate workshops be included in the information available by ordering.

- Personal belief systems were not addressed in any discussions and presentations. The impact of spirituality on the family was missed. This question should be discussed.

- The examples of native and Indian communities building and strengthening their families and communities was encouraging. Government can not do everything. Individuals and groups need to help themselves. Some families need support to give them the courage and desire to want to change and hope for the future.

- Delegates were hopeful some concrete changes would occur from the symposium.

- A recommendation was made to have a full day session for delegate discussion.

- Groups recommended that each province develop an interdisciplinary committee of government, corporations, labour, academics and helping professionals, to synthesize the information gathered, and to make recommendations for family policy development and support.

GROUP 9 **Facilitator: Florence Driedger**
Recorder: Ron Pollock

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Flexibility is needed in defining the family when developing policy or legislation.

- Government needs to recognize the variety of families that exist.

- Society needs to develop male/female role models to have available for single parent families.

- When describing families, we must ensure that all the varieties are recognized.

- We must recognize the fact women are in the workplace and that men are not assuming their share of family responsibilities. Marriage counselling needs to speak to this issue.

- The male role needs to be defined.

- Government and public forums should have policies that show male parenting as part of their presentation.

- Government needs to be sensitive in recognizing families as they are.

- If a group of people describes itself as a family, then it is a family, regardless of sexual orientation of its members or its structure.

- The rights and needs of children and their stability need to be recognized and the focus should be on the child rather than adults in relation to the permanence of living arrangements.

- We must recognize that if there is family violence, it is still a family, (this needs to be looked at). " Sharing and Caring".

- Some delegates were concerned about the broadness in definition of the family.

- More assistance is needed for single mothers - support, education and financial assistance.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Government should condense the recommendations from all the studies that have been made of families and put them forward with the will to do something concrete.

- Government should involve the grassroots in family policy development.

- Community leaders and people have to work together and engage in debate before action will begin.

- More public education around family issues is needed to encourage people to reach out and held develop a larger framework.

- Society needs to really enforce sharing and caring and ensure that the resources needed to enhance programming are available.

- The decline of organized religion has left a gap which needs to be filled in the areas of values the morals. School systems, government and community need to be involved. The school curriculum needs to be adjusted to reflect this.

- The roles of and the relationships between the community, education, government and parents need to be defined.

- Each province should undertake to develop and deliver a model program over the next year.

- Public images of families need to include multi-racial families.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Community consultations should take place to discuss and develop program directions and to assist in the treatment, and education of families.

- More public education needs to be made available in communities, regarding the family.

- Two critical areas need addressing:
  . the lack of resources for community programs,
  . the need to define a clear male role that avoids using power and control and to find men who can serve as role models for the community.

- We must recognise volunteer support groups.

- Policy at the federal level needs to reflect the recommendations made in Linda MacLeod's presentation.

- Policy needs to reflect needs of the children in relation to family violence.

- Family violence needs more community involvement, also, more Federal/Provincial funding should be made available.

- Non-governmental organisations who need to fund raise to maintain their programs put themselves at risk by not spending their energy in program development. Funds have been reduced and people in the community are frustrated.

- Our priorities need reviewing in order to reflect a commitment to families.

- We must teach the problems and issues of family violence to managers and staff both in both the public and private sectors.

- More education is needed to teach about power and control in relationships.

- Government must recognize the lack of funds provided to the Family Violence area, this needs to be addressed.

- Two separate problems have to be considered in dealing with family violence, they are violence in the relationship between partners, and violence as a result of alcohol abuse. A distinction also needs to be made between men who are generally violent and anti-social, and men whose violence is confined to their female partners.

- There should be more encouragement of the Open Adoption system, it is more humane. More development is needed.

- Co-parenting is being received more positively, (shared parenting. Government policies should affirm and promote this.

- Politicians need to be told about the high level of interest in family life, and that they should reflect this interest in financial and political support.

- We need to support more community involvement, as people are becoming isolated.

- Funding needs to be made available for broad based services.

- Non-governmental organisations spend too much time and energy fund-raising to be effective in delivering programs.

- It is suggested government fund something that involves all the aspects of family life and set a pattern - rather than fund specific programs i.e. Community Support and involvement.
- Delegates would encourage each province to undertake a couple of pilot projects to bring all the actors together to deal with identified community needs.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Hard nosed decisions need to be made to determine where our health care system is going.
- Priorities need to be reviewed as to where we spend our dollars. Objective decisions need to be made.
- Governments should fund and promote preventative service area of health care. We need to be personally responsible for our health.
- Existing health care providers need to be reviewed and their current practices should be repriorized.
- WE should encourage and support "**Wellness**"; dollars should be directed to this area.
- Children's health problems need to be addressed in terms of a "**Wellness**" state and Government should recognize and deal with this issue.
- Too many children are living in poverty, this needs to be addressed.
- More funds are needed for the elderly for support programs which would decrease trips to the doctor.
- The profile of the public health system should be raised as it could play a significant role. An holistic approach is required, with more education in prevention.
- The educational system needs to support the "**Wellness**" concept.
- Society needs to accept the way we are, not a stereotyped view. Education is needed to change people's perspective so that they know they are OK even if they do not fit the stereotype.
- Alcohol advertising is very counter-productive.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- A year-round education system is needed, based on the semester system.

- A more flexible work year is required, so that families can work together.

- We need more utilization of the physical plant of the education system. Schools should become more community centres, (gyms are part of the community). A review is necessary.

- Schools need a larger role in teaching rules, values, etc. through role-modelling.

- Education needs to impart the view that education is a life-long commitment. Attitudes need to be changed regarding this.
- The school drop-out rate needs to be reviewed on a micro level, more flexibility is needed.

- More support systems to help young single parents stay in the educational system are needed. We need more supportive, more personalized schools for those who do not fit the regular school system.

- Education should be geared more to vocational rather than academic learning, (e.g. towards service industries, including social services such as day care). More flexibility is needed.

- We must develop and promote the attitude of co-operation rather than competition. Society needs an attitude change.

6. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- An increase in basic wages is required.

- A reduction of the work week is needed.

- Employment standards should be improved, and government should also act to increase the length of holidays.

- We need to create programs to support employees.

- Government funded Employee Assistance Programs are needed.

- The Ontario government's Social Assistance Review Committee report, `Transitions' should be reviewed, and the recommendations considered for possible implementation.

7. LAW AND THE FAMILY

- Difficulties with Maintenance Order enforcement must be resolved.
- Courts must be made more accessible, court fees should be waived for those who cannot pay, more funding should be put into legal aid services and more para-legals should be hired.
- Lawyers need training to make them more knowledgable and sensitive in dealing with their clients' emotional needs.
- Lawyers' fees should be set at a lower, more reasonable level.
- More legal aide lawyers are required as caseloads are too high.
- Native Court Workers are important as educators and as a bridge between clients and the professional. More support is needed to help the public address the legal system. An intermediary system should be available.
- The Divorce Act needs to be reviewed; para-legals could do a lot of divorce work.
- Mediation counsellors could serve a larger role.
- Do we need an adversarial system? An adversarial system can destroy the mediation process.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- We should encourage government to pursue media advertising to help change attitudes regarding family life, for example, the Mormon Church family life advertising.
- We should encourage government to investigate the production of advertising reflecting positive attitudes towards family life, including:- siblings, grandparents, the community, values, sharing, & caring.
- Policies should reflect strong families and strong communities in six ways - appreciation, communication, conflict/resolution (skills within families), spending time together, commitment to each other and a spiritual purpose beyond ourselves.
- Advertising depicting situational ethics, such as that sponsored by the Mormon Church and the R.C.M.P., should be the media's prime promotion effort.

- We should use both our skills in information handling and dissemination and the latest in high technology to get these messages across.

9. **FAMILY INCOME**

- Governments need to address the large number of people in living in poverty.

- The nature of poverty has changed in Canada and this needs to be reviewed. Existing information is no longer valid, and the shift in wealth quite dramatic, i.e. high interest rates.

- Attitudes need to be reviewed in regard to competition versus co-operativeness.

- Government should give consideration to tax breaks for mothers to stay at home with their children.

- Single employees should be given a tax break.

- Policies should affirm the importance of children:
  . Family allowance should not be a taxable benefit,
  . Parents with more than four children should be allowed to stay at home, should not be `punished' and should have an adequate income.

- Family income should not be taxable in lower income families.

- Family income not be deducted from social assistance benefits.

- A Guaranteed Annual Income plan should be looked at as a feasible possibility.

- An income plan for children should be considered.

- Youth and the elderly need a stronger voice, an advocate, as they are not as capable. Their concerns should be dealt with separately.

10. **PARENTING TODAY**

- Government support needs to strengthen and support parent education.

- Policies should not just reflect the needs of an urban setting, but should be adaptable and reflect a range of environments and cultures.

GROUP 10 **Facilitator: Pat Dezutter**
Recorder: Elizabeth Smith

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Policy development must focus on an all inclusive definition of the family and programs must adapt to the changing structure and needs of the family.

- The protest in Regina this week may indicate governments and their policies have not kept up with the changes.

  What can be done?
  - a greater number of backup systems must be put in place;
  - policy makers need reminders of the implications of waiting lists;
  - 24 hour help/assistance is required either from the government or the community.
  - Communities must ensure people know what assistance is available.

- Flexible generic services are required. We must avoid having parallel services offered by several organizations. Agencies must be able to respond to a variety of challenges (i.e., a "one-stop" source for information and where possible, service delivery).

- Community information telephone lines could be a mechanism to get information to people who need services.

- Policies and programs must address the relationship between economic factors (including but not just poverty) and family structures.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- The problem of decreased funding and increased community responsibility was emphasized.

- There must be an opportunity for communities to develop their own solutions; they must be able to share community successes and learn from transferable solutions. However, it must be remembered that solutions may be community specific and not all solutions are appropriate to all communities.

- Delegates expressed concerns about the commitment of governments to Family Services particularly when the responsibility for Family Services seems to frequently change depending upon the whim of the government.

- There was also concern about the current trend of tying expenditures to families, for example, routine Highways and Parks expenditures being promoted as serving families. Is there true commitment to families or is it just "window-dressing"?

Food Banks

- The wrong people may be using food banks. Is it possible that people are spending their money on alcohol and cigarettes because they know free food is available at the food bank? The group questioned whether food banks are an example of turning responsibilities back to the community.

Policy Formation

- It is difficult to change policies (or recommend changes to policies) without knowing the principles and assumptions which were used as the basis for the development of the original policy. Governments may risk attack by providing this information, but, it would greatly assist people who are trying to provide input for on-going policy development or revision.
- Policy makers must have a strategic vision; they must be willing to dream; and, they cannot be isolated from the community. Policies cannot just adapt. Policies must be proactive, not reactive.

General Comments

- The National Symposium lacked a discussion on the role of local government in providing services to families.
- Comment from the floor: It was disgraceful that more politicians did not attend the conference.
- We must ensure government funding does not erode community priorities. The government should fund what the community cannot or will not fund at the local level.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Policy makers must listen to the people involved. Natives are asking to be listened to; this goes for all groups.
- Governments cannot force funding. There must be a balance between community priorities and government priorities. Communities must have a say in how funds are spent to make sure real needs are being met.

- To prevent future problems we must focus on the children.

- If we are serious about eliminating family violence we must direct resources to the perpetrator, not removing the family from the home. We must not victimize the victims.

- Where are the children's rights? Are we too concerned about the rights of the abuser. Services to victims must be streamlined.

- Criminal systems do not seem to work. The criminal system involves: onerous evidence requirements; proof; adversarial relationships; red tape.

- Are we putting resources into people who cannot be rehabilitated. If so, the resources should be directed to helping the children (or victims in general).

- There needs to be greater emphasis placed on empowering the victims of violence.

- We must examine the values we demonstrate when dealing with violence. Generally we turn first to police intervention rather than prevention and other community solutions.

- The group questioned whether all people have a right to have children. Particularly people such as drug addicts, alcoholics, etc.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Welfare is a marker of health problems. (Note: Welfare seems to be the marker, not poverty.)

- The medical model may have to change. Resources need to be devoted to the promotion of wellness and preventative information. Currently resources seem to be devoted to massive facilities, equipment and fees for private doctors.

- Health promotion must be linked to education and the school program, e.g., information about nutrition, exercise, sexuality, etc.

- Health funding is a political issue. It is time to take on the thought that we need expensive technology to retain life.
  Is it all necessary?

- Our medical system is founded on the conflict of private enterprise doctors who are working in a public system. The doctors:
  - insist on ownership;
  - feel threatened by nurse practitioners;
  - are the only entry to health care system.

- Mental Health Services need to be evaluated. People in poverty may not be getting quality help compared to other consumers.

- Must LINK education and health.

- Value structure must reflect health goals.

- Education is critical at all levels and many people do not know the seriousness of simple actions. Some examples:
  - shaking a baby can cause severe problems;
  - people need to know that healthy babies can be deformed through injury (not always born with problems).

- Breakfasts
  - do people know the importance of good breakfasts;
  - do the poor know the value of and do they have opportunities to provide healthy meals;
  - can we legislate breakfast?

- Governments may be educating at too high a level. People need basic factual information about good health, nutrition and exercise.

- We must ensure both boys and girls are given family life/health education.

- Taking personal responsibility can be very difficult. Sometimes the system seems to make it too easy to walk away from problems and not try to change them.

- Do we need more marriage counselling?

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Policies should not be directed only at schools. For example, literacy programs for adults are becoming increasingly prevalent.

- There is a tremendous need for life-long learning opportunities.

- Adult Basic Education is a right. Adults who did not succeed in school as a child must have a chance. There are enormous intergenerational consequences of illiteracy.

- We must find ways to deal with Adult Education. The focus cannot be solely on primary and secondary education.

- Has education been removed from the family? Currently children are learning things that parents don't know about and there is a gap between the parents and the children. Examples: new math, computers. School is virtually universal. If used properly it can be a real focus point for family contact.

- Changing labour force patterns impact on the time parents are spending with their children. As dual-income families become more common, additional responsibility for caring for children is being directed to the school.

- Mobility may be common characteristic behind children who have problems in school. Frequent moves may lead to educational difficulties.

- The increasingly mobile nature of the population must be considered as education policy is being developed.

- Abusive homes and family problems can also lead to learning problems.

- A holistic approach is required to tackle these problems and remedial opportunities must be available for people of all ages and income levels.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Government and business must be proactive and help people cope with modern structures and the problems they create. Examples include:
  . women working;
  . single parents;
  . dual-income families.
  The model has changed; the policies have not.

- Teenage employment is leading to real problems. It takes away from family time and school time. Teens have no time for sports and leisure activities. Family members are not at home to participate in family activities - even things as simple as sharing meal times.

- Should labour policy be changed to consider part-time work? There were concerns that part-time employees were being exploited, particularly when it comes to benefits. Labour laws may be too focused on the employer and not on the family.

- Immigrant families often face language problems. Teenage salaries may be needed to supplement family income until parents can get established.

- Disabled Employees
  - are labour laws leading to exploitation in sheltered workshops where the disabled can be employed for less than minimal wages;
  - many people in sheltered workshops can learn more skills with the right assistance;
  - integration of the disabled and the handicapped into the community is important.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The legal system must support families not hinder them.

- The police need more power in order to be effective. Many cases are rejected because of technical errors. This can result in children being returned to abusive homes and other dangerous situations.

- Lawyers are driven by dollars and the profit motive. The group discussed how mediation fees are being increased because mediation has become profitable for legal firms.

- Restitution and criminal injuries compensation is important to the victim. However at times it might make more sense to direct funds to rehabilitating the abuser.

- Social workers must be able to deal with problems outside of or in addition to the criminal systems. People should be able to get counselling/assistance without being reported to the police.

- The law and the legal system should become more supportive of families. Often domestic situations are made worse by police (criminal) intervention. Perhaps abusers should be given an opportunity for treatment before the criminal system is involved.

8. COMMUNICATIONS WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Computers are having an impact on communications. Parents are becoming concerned about children not developing interpersonal skills if they are spending extensive time with the computer.

- People have a hard time getting together in family settings. Very often the family message board is the key method of communication.

- The basic concepts of communication must be taught in schools.

- The information revolution is changing the way we work. There appears to be a move back to cottage industries. If we can be linked by computer networks, perhaps we can stop going to the workplace. Will this lead to increased isolation?

- Family reunions are an ideal way for extended families to meet and get to know one another.

- The family reunion discussion generated many ideas about family vacations including the following ideas and comments:
  - . Provincial campsites should allow family (group) campsites to permit extended families to plan inexpensive family holidays.
  - . Hotels and camp grounds should have family discounts.
  - . Transportation costs often prohibit disadvantaged families from taking vacation. (How many welfare families ever have a chance to visit provincial parks? Could we implement subsidized transportation for day trips?)

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Policies are required to ensure everyone has an adequate income level.

- Welfare must be a hell of a lot more humane.

- Policies must let people get off the welfare cycle. The system may force people to cheat to survive. The group questioned why people have to lie and cheat in order to get sufficient funds to live.

- The stigma of receiving assistance will always exist unless we have universality with a tax back for those who do not need it.

- Low cost housing generally creates ghettos. Integration is required in order to get community support and assistance for people in need.

- The major goal of housing programs is to provide work and housing. Social policy considerations appear to be secondary.

- Integration is needed to get elderly, handicapped and the disabled in the mainstream. This is good for everyone and encourages tolerance and acceptance. Segregation and isolation must avoided.

- Policy makers must avoid the trap of assuming certain people need a particular service. People should not be lumped together and treated as a generic group. For example, economic circumstance may put people together in subsidized housing but this does not mean they all have the same social and educational needs.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- Do parents realize they need to learn to be a parent and can improve parenting skills.

- When is discipline really assault? There are times when a slap is the best solution. Have we swung to far in protecting the rights of children?

- Many parents feel they are not doing enough for or with their children.

- Cultural forces can cause guilt if people do not conform to the traditional model.

- Should the provinces be responsible for implementing mandatory parenting courses? Particularly for those who are deemed to be at risk?

- In the past extended families gave information and advice to new parents and provided respite. This seldom is possible in today's society.

- Parent education is often too formal and too guilt-ridden. Effective parent education is really learning and growing together. It should be an opportunity to share successes as well as frustrations.

GROUP 11 **Facilitator: Allan Hansen**
Recorder: Murray Nurse

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY/FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- The planning of communities by urban planners does not take family needs into account, particularly in smaller centres, but also in large urban communities. Communities should be designed on principles that support families and provide the services they need.

- Communities must priorize their use of resources in terms of centralized or decentralized service availability.

- A collaborative community development process is needed, involving dialogue between all the actors. While services should be as close to the community as possible (i.e. smaller is better), it is not possible to have all services in smaller centres, but they should be available within a region.

2. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- There is a need for focused case management when working with multi-problem families. There should be a collaborative intervention with families rather than several disciplines working independently without joint consultation.

- All services should be available on a "one-stop shopping" model (holistic service accessibility).

- Vulnerable families are often poor families - the economics of poverty should be addressed in policy development to partially address the needs of and the services required by vulnerable families.

3. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- The preventive, or proactive, public health model should be applied to the social services field, which is largely reactive, particularly in regard to teaching parenting skills and ensuring family survival.

- Human service professionals should approach preventive health and social issues by dealing with the family as a unit, rather than just dealing with individual family members.

4. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Governments should note that teachers cannot be all things to all children or people, but perhaps schools can.

- Society expects too much from the education system.

- Families have delegated too much responsibility to the school system. The teaching of morals/and values should be started at the family level.

- Greater use should be made of visual media in promoting family development.

5. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Management decisions affecting work hours should be balanced by family needs. The needs of companies are often opposite to those of family life. For example, the Saskatchewan Transportation Company (STC) changed its routes which meant that drivers were working from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. five days a week.

- There needs to be a shared responsibility between employee and employer in arranging family life and work productivity. For example, a computer programmer may find it ideal to work at midnight, or to work from home.

- Communication regarding the needs of family life is not occurring between employers and employees. The dialogue must go both ways, and to some extent, the onus is on employees to make their family needs known and to develop plans to accommodate them.

6. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The emphasis should be upon win:win solutions rather than on the traditional adversarial win:lose model.

- Judges should be more accountable in their application of family law. More and better training for judges is required.

- The legal system should make use in-service process already in place to build up the knowledge of judges and other legal professionals.

7. PARENTING TODAY

- There is a lack of role models available for single parent families.

- Parent training opportunities should be available to young people at an early age.

- Marriage preparation courses should be compulsory.

8. THEMES

- **GOVERNMENT** should address economic issues and poverty.

- **GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES** should address the need for community leadership and grass-roots participation, particularly within smaller centres.

- **BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, UNIONS, MANAGEMENT AND INDIVIDUALS** must all take a leadership role in the workplace, and recognise their various needs and their mutual dependence, and must build mutual trust.

- **POLITICIANS** must become more responsive and learn to listen sympathetically to lay people.

- **PROFESSIONALS** in all disciplines need to not only define problems, but also to become better listeners with their clients and the community.

- **PROFESSIONALS** must guard against professional jealousy and competition, which can adversely affect the service they are providing.

- **TEACHERS AND PARENTS** should make better use of visual media in communication with and skill development for families.

9. GENERAL

- The Symposium was a good start in developing family policy.

- There should be more time allowed for dialogue at the next Symposium.

- There should be regional follow-up by all the provincial governments.

- Next time, there should be delegate input into the selection of speakers.

GROUP 13 **Facilitator: Don Gray**
Recorder: David Norminton

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- The traditional family remains the norm in society. The traditional moral values within this family structure needs to be recognized and supported. These values are necessary for a healthy family.

- Parenting skills and effective communication present a problem for everyone.

- Parenting special needs children is particularly difficult. Long waiting lists for services to these children is frustrating, e.g. infant stimulation programs.

- Public awareness (facilitated by government) about the changing nature of the family, its structure, demographics, role changes in mother and father, is required. People need information about what the realities of the current family structure are.

- Public awareness (facilitated by government) regarding the educational system and its changing structure, emphasis, (e.g. bilingualism, curriculum) and resulting problems.

- An observation made was that today's children are much more accepting of cultural differences than previous generations. This is due to cultural blending occurring in French immersion programs and the diversity of ethnic backgrounds of children. Children possess less judgemental attitudes. Adults need to "catch up" to their children in this respect. Public awareness of this new strength in this generation today would be of benefit.

- It is unacceptable to have very poor families today. A strong family policy, broad enough to provide for the most needy, is necessary. An ideal policy could be stated, "No family will live below the poverty line", and the Departments should work toward this, with commitment.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Schools are a focal point of community involvement in our families. Many of the instructional and recreational programs occur there.

- Need for flexible, varied child care services. The alternative of "family care" to day care services needs to be recognized and strengthened. It is acknowledged that "grandma" is as equally qualified a care giver, as a day care centre. A family home is, in fact, preferable. This needs to be supported by government through tax credits or subsidies.

- Guaranteed annual income seen as worthy of consideration.

- Mentally handicapped people should be receiving services and support in their own communities. The potential strength is available in the community.

- Differences in the support systems for children may rely on the program's popularity. An example to better illustrate this was: French immersion students get bus transportation provided to their school, whereas those special needs children who are developmentally delayed and who require special education and work experience do not get this consideration. Yet, they are much more needy.

- "Natural" leaders, not necessarily "elected" people evolve in communities. These are the people who inevitably become involved in committees, etc., to develop and strengthen the community, or to provide services for the underprivileged. These people need to be recognized, validated and sought out for their perceptions and information and to lead in new initiatives by government.

- Treatment services for the most needy should be publicly supported.

- Supportive family programs by employers and communities are required.

- Large corporations and companies, need to be influenced to include policies toward family support programs, not just day care.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Identification of violent youth and "at-risk" families is important, and treatment is required. Break-up of the family unit is not always the answer.

- There is more violence in step-parent or common-law relationships.

- Social workers can be assisted in the treatment of families, e.g. family violence, by having an "advocate family" work with the problem family. This "advocate family" would be a family who has successfully dealt with the problem areas presently being experienced by the client family.
- Support for how governments presently deal with identified abusive families was voiced, i.e. protection of children.
- A concept of "Community Mediation Services" was discussed. Its purposes would include mediation for families in conflict and teaching conflict resolution skills to families. Services could be provided through a Mediation Centre, complementing the services of transition houses, etc., and as a referral service for other programs.
- We cannot deal one-to-one with the rising numbers of at-risk families. Community assistance is needed.
- Accessibility of support services for families should be the right of individuals, the same as medical services. Marital and children's counselling services should be readily available. Accessibility, it is hoped, may help develop an attitude from which those families who need help, may on their own initiative seek help.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Churches, community associations, and concerned individuals (natural leaders in the community) can provide low cost personalized services for people in need by very qualified people.
- Nutritional counselling and awareness program are needed by families. Can be developed by Public Health.
- Our families - everyone's families - from urban native (in poverty) to middle class, are experiencing the problem of preparing of nutritious meals. On one end, economics impact on the availability of nutritious food; on the other end, "When do we have time to prepare nutritious meals?" The malnourished and the anorexic are on the same continuum. Concern was raised that in a two-parent working couple family, children may not be getting healthy meals. Public awareness is required.
- Mental health and physical health are equally important.
- Priorities need to be re-assessed. The needs of the most disadvantaged need to be recognized as society's greatest concern. Tax dollars need to be directed towards this end.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- School systems need to work with parents, and quit complaining about how they are taking over all the roles and responsibilities of the parents. School systems do not appear open to parents. Parents will assist, if given the opportunity, in such areas as family life studies, sex education.

- More "training on the job" opportunities for Special Education students are needed. Present programs are too confined in job skill areas; new initiatives are needed.

- Special Education students (including the developmentally delayed, mildly retarded) are being channelled towards a poverty line existence. They need and deserve more.

- Schools can't keep to themselves and remain insular. An addition to the curriculum (which presently is excellent) needs to be time for discussion and awareness of what is actually happening in today's world. Discussion in the classroom regarding child abuse, hostage-taking, etc., could include "what is being done now" and "what should be done". The outcome of this kind of course would be the development of children into responsible citizens with community awareness and concern for others. Children, too, have valid input to give and share on issues.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Some progressive changes in the work place have occurred already that would not have been thought about years ago. No smoking areas, exercise rooms, physical health focus. There needs to be encouragement towards supportive family programs such as:
  - job sharing
  - flex time
  - benefits
  - father involvement in family matters recognized by employers
  - child care facilities

  These need not all be financed by companies. A "user-pay" arrangement (to some extent) for child care would help avoid discrimination towards single employees.

- Stress related pressures should be recognized.

- Alcohol/drug abuse programs and information services need to be available.

- "DR. MAURICE CHAMPAGNE's address needs to be heard word for word."

- We are in a transition phase in male-female roles and expectations in parenting. Recognition of changing attitudes is necessary.

- Changes to tax system need to reflect this changing family.

- Services must be developed for problems resulting from this change.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Presumptions of care of child, according to law, need to be re-studied, as these are affecting support obligations and property divisions.

- The law needs to recognize the realities of some marriages, i.e. responsibilities, assets, etc., are not necessarily shared equally.

- Upcoming dilemmas: Who is going to be a legal parent as a result of the new technology in reproduction?

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Media, especially television, does not reflect the traditional family. Focus is on tragedy in the family, problem areas and not so much on good things. What are children learning?

- Schools, churches and families need to provide the services, discussion and attitudes of a healthy lifestyle.

- Advertisements towards non-smoking are helpful and effective in the family.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Governments today discriminate, through tax structure, against the single-income-earning family; e.g. one person earning $53,000 has the Family Allowance taxed back, two people each earning $49,000 will not have the Family Allowance taxed back. (Refer to tax policies as identified by DR. ROBERT GLOSSOP)

- Tax policies force families to double-earning incomes. As a result, one parent is discouraged from providing parenting within their own family.

- Increased child tax credit is needed to make more disposable income available to the most needy families.

- Government policy must be neutral; i.e. treat the single-earning family the same as the double-earning family.

- Accountability is required from the FEDERAL government regarding their budget recommendations in the areas of social and economic policies as they affect families.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- Those authorities, i.e. individuals, who provide parenting programs, marriage preparation courses, etc., require a practical knowledge of parenting issues. "We don't have non-swimmers teach people how to swim." Teachers, course givers, must be more than "good people". A knowledge base. skills and practical knowledge are necessary.

- Role modelling is an important parental responsibility.

- The creation of "mediation program" to deal with family disputes, parent-child conflicts and marital difficulties is required.

11. OTHER ISSUES

- The role of "homemaker" needs to be revered and recognized for its contribution to our society, at considerable economic expense at times to the lifestyle of women who assume that role.

- Awareness is needed about the demands being placed on current families. We should not "retreat back to the traditional family" without consideration for the growth and progress of the current family structure in regards to the roles of men and women.

GROUP 14 **Facilitator: Richard Hazel**
Recorder: Sean Himsl

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- There has been a failure to address the problems of teenagers as demonstrated by the lack of support and recognition of the problems related to teens and the fact that teens have been overlooked due to the emphasis placed on baby boomers.

- Society has a preoccupation with violence. This is seen in sports and entertainment. Teens are brought up with the understanding that violence is acceptable.

- Children experience a lack of stability due to working parents and the current daycare system (or lack of it).

- Children need continuity in their role-models and care-givers, we must educate parents in the need for continuity, and recognize the underlying family background (single parents, multiple fathers/mothers/step-parents).

- We must educate children to understand relationships and intimacy. This education should be provided by the school system.

- We should encourage the involvement of teens in policy discussion.

- The changing values and problems facing parents result in them conveying uncertain values to their children. The result is frustration and violence. A solution would be a grassroots symposiums directed to families.

- There is a need for parents to reassess their position, status and values.

- We must educate individuals as to how to access services. We must strengthen individuals.

- Families have always had problems; it is just that now the problems are discussed, not hidden.

- We must be proactive and recognize the problems associated with new family structures.

- Society must assess new types of relationships (e.g. co-habitation) and formally accept them and communicate this acceptance to children.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Policy makers must hear the words of women and adjust policies to meet their needs. Workers and employers must become responsible and meet women's needs.
- We must emphasize self-help organizations, for example, Alcoholics Anonymous, Friends of Schizophrenics, to offset the lack of the extended family.
- Families must be given an interest in and have an assortment and range of services made available to them.
- Individuals must stop and assess their own situation and needs and then attempt to access the appropriate resources. Appropriate resources must be available.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- We must develop assistance programs for aggressors as well as for victims.
- Violence of any type is not acceptable.
- We must improve the responsiveness of the justice system, particularly in the areas of the timeliness of process,more sympathetic treatment of all those involved, and improved treatment programs.
- We must involve victims and aggressors as well as past participants in the development of treatment programs.
- We must develop early intervention programs aimed at high risk children in order to decrease their future potential for violence and abuse.
- We should emphasize public support and pressure in conjunction with government structures and utilize high-profile organizations such as sports associations and service clubs.
- We should utilize front-line service providers as advisors and participants in treatment program development.
- We must promote the need for involvement and treatment when symptoms of family violence first appear and encourage family involvement and communication.
- We must emphasize and publicize successful cases as opposed to failures.

- We must educate society at all levels, through the schools and through the media.

- We must ensure that complaints in cases of family violence cannot be withdrawn once they have been lodged.

- The stigma associated with using social services must be removed.

- We should work at changing the public's perception to view social services as part of the continuum of health care services.

- Government must become responsive to vulnerable communities and economically depressed regions.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Industry must accept a responsibility to support a healthy lifestyle of staff and consumers as well as showing concern for the environment and Occupational Safety requirements.

- Specific supports are needed for families with handicapped children.

- Government should provide the resource development and the identification of a responsible agency to deal with potential suicides, (eliminate the gap in service).

- Research is needed to determine underlying the reasons for suicide, and to attempt to identify common factors and resolve this problem.

- Poverty is a causal factor in many health problems, therefore, a guaranteed annual income should be introduced.

- There are contradictory actions by support and educational agencies. On the one hand they teach health but they also provide for engagement in unhealthy activities.

- The physician's fee-schedule should be restructured to encourage the quality of service to sick individuals, rather than provide rewards based on the number of individuals seen.

- We should promote sex education in schools, in terms both of attitudes to sex and the potential dangers.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Sex education should stress communicable diseases, values and birth control information.

- Compulsory family life education should be available to both teachers and students.

- Lunch programs should be introduced in schools.

- Nutrition and its impact on the prevention of illness should be taught. More dieticians and dietary education are required.

- Non-traditional health care delivery systems and medicine should be considered to develop a more holistic system.

6. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- Employers must provide programs to resolve staff family problems.

- Government should make it attractive to employers to support the family.

- Government should become a role model in promoting good family life amongst their employees.

- Any assistance obtained should be deductible on personal tax forms.

- Grants are available for farm labour but not for substitute child care if both parents are engaged in the farm's operations.

- Society, government and employers should be adopting and promoting the values currently espoused by churches, "the family is important".

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Any complaint lodged by a wife in an abuse situation should be investigated. The option for the wife to withdraw the complaint should be eliminated.

- Court waiting time should be shortened so that uncertainty is reduced once charges have been laid.

- Government should recognize the inadequacies of the legal system and provide advocacy, mediation and support services for children during times of crisis and family break-up.

- Services should emphasize removing the perpetrator from a home when violence or abuse occurs.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN THE FAMILY

- We should review the impact of audio-visual media on families and social values.
- Increased support for educational and art-related programming is needed.
- There should be an increase cross-generational programming.
- Television programs have the effect of heightening fears of change, misfortune and disaster.
- We must educate parents to provide appropriate direct communication stimulation to children from birth.
- We must teach everyone to be critical and discriminating in what they watch on television.
- There is need for the promotion of media literacy.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Government should introduce a Guaranteed Family Income.
- Poverty is causal factor in other problems such as family violence and mental health concerns.
- The minimum wage should provide a family income above the poverty line.
- Government should ensure that the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and the Guaranteed Family Income does not discourage individuals from seeking employment.
- Social assistance should be tied to the cost of living and currently existing basic services.
- Government should set profit limits for industry.
- Government should ensure that its current programs are well managed and emphasize service.
- Will society have to accept that some individuals will never work?
- Government should subsidize those in low productivity/low paying jobs.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- Family life education should be provided to children.
- Programs should promote parenting as a normal and healthy lifestyle.
- Government should take the lead in promoting a structure for parent education.
- We must recognize the difference between discipline and abuse and educate society and parents as to the difference as well as to the need for appropriate discipline for children.
- Government should provide the supports necessary to assist families to raise their children in a healthy manner.

GROUPS 15 AND 24 **Facilitator: Marie MacDonald**
Recorder: Sandy Stepan

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Demographic changes should have no effect on families.

- Distance is a factor (i.e. population migration). Services are becoming centralized, therefore fewer rural services are available. People are forced to uproot and move to where jobs are available.

- The standard of living in today's society is being lowered by single parents, etc.

- There is a question as to whether demographic predictions over the next 40 years are reliable.

- Why is there a Baby Bust? Are there really reasons for these changes in demographics?

- There must be movement (immigration and emigration) in communities in order to keep them up to societal changes, as isolated communities get stagnant.

- Relocating from centre to centre as dictated by type of work (i.e. military, banking background) has an effect on the families.

- The family today is "any combination of two or more persons who are bound together by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption/placement and who, together, assume responsibilities for variant combinations of some of the following: physical maintenance and care of group members; addition of new members through procreation or adoption; socialization of children; social control of members; production, consumption and distribution of goods and services; and, affective nurturance." (Quotation taken from June 1989 Transition Report produced by Vanier Institute of the Family).

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Every community should be able to provide before and after school child care. One idea is to have schools sponsor such programs (i.e., education based system).

- Families should be subsidized instead of facilities so that parents can care for their children rather than having to use a facility in order to get financial support.

- There is a misunderstanding that child care funding must be for day care facilities and homes rather than making it possible for families to care for their children in their own home.

- Why is there a need for Double Income Families? The answer to this is that we could live on one income but society pressures us to have and want more and more. Society pressures us to provide more for our children now than ever before.

- There has been government support to communities in the past and this support will not be taken away easily. However we must now look for programming from community UP (programming which would best suit the specific needs of community).

- The definition of community is changing.

- Every family is different, as is every community. Our goal should be to try to best meet everyone's needs.

- The community is a very powerful resource. We must identify what the community has to offer and use existing resources fully.

- A community can be broken down into smaller and smaller parts (i.e. church, education and work communities).

- Who sets programs up at the community level? You really only need one person with initiative to get a program started, then you need a combined community effort to keep it going.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Recognizing that women who play a homemaker role in the home are equal will result in less violence. We need to be able to place a social value on the work the woman does in the home. This could be accomplished by the "tax system", "pension system", etc.

- Women do not think very highly of themselves.

- Being a mother is the most important role or job in this world.

- Caring for mentally and physically handicapped persons was an important topic overlooked by the Symposium. There is a high level of violence in families with handicapped persons and we need programs to help people cope. Respite programs should be for both the handicapped children in a family and for normal children in a family where there are handicapped children. The latter would allow the parents to spend time alone with their handicapped child without interruptions from their other children, if they so desire.

- The topic of elderly people should have been discussed more at the Symposium.
- We need to know why abuse is happening before solutions can be found.
- Policy must be set to apply to all families (across the board) as opposed to special interest groups. A cross-sectional viewpoint should be reinforced at symposiums, multi-disciplinary conferences, cross-cultural discussions, etc.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- We are currently in a trend of wellness rather than illness.
- Lifestyles programs are becoming essential in our society. Topics of these programs include food, stress, exercise, etc.
- There needs to be more follow up care by the health profession once an initial diagnosis is made. Someone in the community could take on this role, as doctors are paid for diagnosing, not for advising. We must spread the responsibility for health education to the community.
- Education to prevent health problems is very effective and welcomed. It could take the place of high-tech care in some instances.
- The abuse of prescription drugs has been cited in Prince Edward Island. Drug education is very well taught in schools today. We need to use our children's education to educate ourselves, by listening to what they have to say.
- There needs to be a repriorization of health budgets, however it is difficult to change because the public will not give up what they already have and funds cannot be redirected without pain. The question becomes, how do we get the public to give up something they have now, to gain in the future? The expectation today is to have more and more with fewer delays (e.g. one expects there to be no waiting line for hospital beds, etc.).

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- The role of schools is important.

- Education as we used to know it is outdated. There are now new techniques to be learned and teachers must be continually upgraded (our system presently holds in-service training sessions to achieve this).

- We should start looking at similarities in terms of family structure rather than differences and base the education system on these similarities.

- Schools cannot do everything but they can help.

- There should be integration between the education system and other aspects of the community. The school facility should be used as a community centre (i.e. open after 3:00 p.m.).

- The school system should be more flexible (e.g. have the option of bringing in external speakers if the need exists).

- There should be greater involvement of parents in school programming. Schools must give up some more control to the parents.

- Schools should be suitable cross-culturally.

- Consideration should be given to keeping families home longer to instill values at home rather than in school where they are forced to cope with peer pressure.

- The education system does not always meet the individual needs of children.

- Many problems are only dealt with after there are problems and little or no preventive action has been taken.

- Smaller schools promote participation where larger schools do not. For example, smaller schools have more parent involvement and more interaction between different age groups.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) must be adapted to each particular organization (requirements differ between small and large companies).

- All cities are beginning to look the same (i.e. full of McDonald's, Burger Kings, etc.). We may need to encourage independent small businesses rather than franchises.
- Who is responsible for troubled or special needs employees? Is the employer responsible? This sometimes becomes a "passing the buck" situation.

Child Care

- Communities can play a role in this for relatively low cost rather than government-provided solutions. However, it is not possible to have community programs look after infant care at low cost without government assistance.
- Where do you find child care to meet the needs of those working irregular hours?
- Mothers are needed most in an infant's first few years, but this is the time when two incomes are most needed, as couples are usually just starting out on their own and have many expenses.
- Parental leave should be an option in any occupation. The Charter should have some influence in terms of the legality of this option. To some degree it is a question of economics and opportunity. Biological makeup is also a factor.
- There must be a partnership between all sectors (government, small business, industry, etc.).

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The topic of handicapped people was left out of the panel discussions surrounding Law and the Family at the Symposium. There are no laws in place to ensure handicapped people are cared for adequately. There is a need for law reform in this area because of the thrust for deinstitutionalization.
- The differences between provincial laws are surprising (i.e. legal age of adulthood).
- The legal age of majority should be increased from 16 years to 19 years (children need to complete maturing between 16 and 19). This age should be made standard across Canada.
- Uniformity in child welfare laws should be established across Canada. Currently there is too much focus on Divorce Law. There is a need to mention issues such as Adoption and Child Welfare.

- The laws are very unclear in respect to various issues (e.g. child custody). There should be consideration of the wellbeing of the key persons in the decision (i.e. those who will be affected most).
- The different needs of various communities will not allow the effective use of uniform laws.
- Laws really make no difference.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- One-on-one communication is most important.
- The focus of programming seems to be on television communication.
- Some believe there is no control as to how much television your family watches and some believe there is.
- Policies are required to allow parents to spend more time with their children. Communication will increase as a result.
- There is a need for more communication workshops. Communication is an art and we need to learn how to do it effectively.
- What is "quality time"?
- Communication stems from family outings and doing things together (e.g. picking raspberries together in a natural setting).
- Parents must be educated as to effective communication.
- Powerful impressions are made through role models (i.e. how parents act really impacts on children).
- There needs to be love in a family in order to be able to communicate.
- Working together as a family is important. Children need to learn work ethics. Families are getting away from involving children in day-to-day tasks.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Why do we need two incomes? The answer is partially greed and partially need.

- We need a fiscal policy that recognizes that the value of staying in the home with children is equivalent to working for money outside the home.
- People need to have the choice to work or to stay with the children.
- Our national fiscal debt will force us to review the social spending and see if national spending is being disbursed most effectively (i.e. family allowance tax-back).
- There is no universality in Canada.
- Are statistics representative? Do they paint the true story? Statistics can be misleading because you can be selective in choosing data. You can portray what you wish (e.g. that children are now the poorest sector of society).

10. PARENTING TODAY

- There should be an emphasis on parenting education. The problem is that the parents needing help most are not the ones who come forward. We need to make such education compulsory.
- The economic stresses we face today often leave parenting as a second choice. It takes a lot of effort to be a good parent.
- Those in the lower economic scale have less resources to spend on parenting, however, those with money will not spend money on parenting anyways.
- There is very little material on parenting designed for those who do not read much or well.
- We must create a community which will share parenting ideas (learn from peers).
- Voluntary participation is critical.
- We must educate children in schools as to what it will be like living in poverty (e.g. supporting three children while on welfare). This type of education may prove to be a preventive program.
- The poor are not given the opportunity for input into selecting a government policy that affects them.
- There is very little interest in parenting today.

- Parents generally do not know how to show their interest in their children.

- The parents of mentally handicapped children are faced with the fact that they will be living with "children" for the rest of their lives. Special education may be required to meet their needs and help them cope.

GENERAL

- The United States has more statistics relating to families. Canada could use more of its own statistics as a basis for policy setting.

- We have a unique society in Canada which we should be striving to keep. For example, we are on the verge of losing CBC and Via Rail, two major Canadian companies. We must keep together as a country (East and West should be working together, not against one another).

- Our fluctuating economic situation should be reflected in policy. The working poor and single parents need to be recognized in this policy. We need support for education on the family. We need to enhance the image of women who choose to stay home with their children.

- Single parenthood is usually an unchosen situation. How do we make single parenthood less common if we decide it is less effective? Prevention should be addressed as a key solution.

- There is no consensus on whether single or dual parents are more effective. It depends too greatly on circumstance.

- We can improve individuals through education and get away from the focus on Nuclear Family.

- The Symposium did not focus enough on the needs of the handicapped and the elderly.

GROUP 16 **Facilitator: Sharon Roulston**
Recorder: Archie La Rocque

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Study into the taxonomies of families in Canada is required, this is particularly important for immigrant families and native families

- Post adoption Services are inadequate particularly for native children adopted into non-native families (opportunities for cultural awareness are required)

- The taxation system should recognize parents who decide to remain in the home and it should be designed to have an equal input in all families. It is felt that the taxation system currently has a differential impact in different types of families.

- The functions of families, e.g. nurturing, caring, are important to consider in discussions about family life. Policies should support those functions wherever they're performed be that in traditional nuclear or extended families or in other societal structures. Some current policies try to force functions into families even though the institution is in trouble.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Community and social policy workers should go to the source and find out what families want from families themselves.

- Minorities are treated differently from mainstream families in the family policy area. Equality of standards of service delivery should be stressed and outcomes of service delivery should be measured particularly for minority groups.

- There was considerable discussion about the empowering of families. Society needs to expand services to meet needs of minorities. It was felt that decision makers listen to the mainstream "normal" group and frequently does not accommodate the needs of minorities.

- The issue of cost of programs directed at families was discussed. Examples used were that parents of special needs or disabled children have exceptional costs which should in some way be addressed by social policy, As well parent education programs should be supported by the community.

- Families are an integral component of "Community" but should not be confused with the community. Families alone cannot cure the issues which are faced by the larger "community". Family intervention should not be received as a panacea.

- Centralized versus decentralized services were discussed. There were opinions as to whether decentralized services are more responsive to families and communities than are centralized ones. Some people felt that central government should provide funds to local communities, who will then make decisions. However it was pointed out that local communities, eg. municipal governments, etc. have not always provided adequately for families. Local governments are not necessarily progressive and centralized base may be needed to ensure program delivery

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- The group felt that the "vulnerable" definition should be expanded to include families with special needs or disabled children.

- Some discussion was made in regard to the needs related to special needs or disabled children. For example, they have to have special schedules, equipment, etc. These costs are frequently borne by the family on its own.
  There should be more active government policy work done in this area.

- Society and governments tend to provide only remedial solutions to problems. We need more work in preventive areas; and we need to support preventive measures which may not be measurable within the typical four year time span which is usual for governmental policy making.

- A note of caution was introduced by one group member who said that "prevention" may be used as a reason not to provide necessary programs for remedial purposes.

- Society should encourage the facilitation of families with like needs getting together for empowerment. It was felt that self-help organizations are an important component of family policy-making.

- Communities should support families with special needs of all types.

- Society should focus on an overall recognition of services provided by families and how demanding those services can be. Families with coping problems tend to work all week and have to spend weekends recovering. Families need family time and societal and economic structures should support that.

- The legal/judicial system does not respond in a timely manner to family situations particularly in the custody and marital settlement area. The advisory system is time and energy consuming.

- Public policy should place emphasis on importance of family matters and functions.

- The group felt that the economic system takes precedence in society and government policy. Decisions based on dollars rather than impact on families eg. job comes first. This situation requires a basic change in societal attitudes.

4. THE HEALTH OF FAMILIES

- Socio-economic factors have a major impact on health and life chances - ie. poor people are less healthy and live shorter lives. This statistical evidence should be acted upon because it is so clearly evident in epidemiological data.

- Cultural differences also seem to have an impact on health and life choices. Certain cultural groups do not get appropriate treatment because the health system is designed by and geared towards the "normal" family.

- Children with special needs or disabilities and their families are in a different culture. In regard to both of these area professionals tend to be from a different culture than or intervention. persons receiving treatment.

- The group agreed that cross cultural techniques should be taught to professionals, e.g. for intake into medical or other professional service areas.

- Services in the health system have been primarily oriented to treatment. The area of primary and secondary prevention have been under-emphasized. The medical system approach may not be appropriate any longer - particularly in the light of apparent effects of socio-economic status on health outcomes.

- Co-ordination of disciplines and of programs is necessary. More societal support for organizations such as Canadian Mental Health Association is required.

- Bureaucratic procedures impede the effective development and delivery of health programs. Government and non-governmental organizations need a coordinative mechanism between departments and programs.

- Issues of family policy need to cross all ministries. This sentiment was strongly supported by the entire group.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- The diversity of types of schools was discussed. Private and alternate schools are a fact of life, but we do need to have minimal standards. These standards should entail some central control even over private schools. That control is a societal and governmental responsibility.

- The role of school is to teach life skills and community living skills in addition to the "three R's". We need both -a mixture of life skills and technological skills.
  It is possible that technology is less important than values and attitudes in the overall picture of the educational system.

- It was observed that children get turned off from education. If children are interested in learning they will be productive. There should be an onus on the educational system to generate that interest.

- It was suggested that government and society promote schools as the "centre" of the community.

- Several group members questioned the validity of the "bottom line" as an educational value. This value is a product of our business-oriented society. However, the "bottom line" alone will not make a well-functioning person.

- Some business environments demand 110% of employees' time and life. This does not allow for a balanced life and may well be injurious to family functioning.

- The group felt that we need more attention paid to children as individuals in educational settings.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Several group members observed there was no representation from organized labour in symposium sessions about work and family life. They felt that this was a weakness in addressing this area.

- Other points raised were:
  - should have initiatives to include all workers in collective bargaining units
  - ensure at a policy level that unions are democratically run
  - educate children on labour issues

- Work environment and employment are major components of a person's life and we should recognize career choice as one of the most important decisions in a person's lifetime. This entails increased facilitation career development and planning as opposed to just "getting a job" after school years have ended.

- People want more influence over what they do and consequently more input on their job and its outcomes.

- The group felt that a more enlightened and innovative approach to job-sharing could be beneficial to job performance as well as to family life eg. teachers sharing a classroom

- Career development (government should be involved in these areas) and family maintenance are an integral part of business environment, and should be seen as important to business planning. There should be higher societal values (such as quality of family life of employees) considered in decisions made in the business community.

- Generalized decision-making is becoming the norm in business and governmental organizations. Several group members felt that leaders should have specialized knowledge and that generalist management structures do not allow for professional skills to be utilized.

- Issues related to the family are not amenable to simple solutions. Dogmatic statements are frequently made by leaders without being clearly thought out. We require a balanced and open exchange of views if society is to begin to address these issues and start a process aimed at solution of problems.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- It was agreed by all group members that law seems to lag behind reality and seems not to accomplish what was intended. The result is unintended consequences for many laws and regulations.

- Some group members felt that the Charter's emphasis on individual rights may work against families but this point was disputed by several other group members.

- The institution of family is not an end in itself. It should meet the needs of the individuals in it.Some families not need meet these needs eg. violence in the family "Family most dangerous place to live" (statement made by a plenary speaker). This statement was disputed by some delegates.

- The Alberta Association of Shelters disputes any notion that families are not violent places and it is concerned about the little amount political announcements on the issue of family violence in connection with the Family Symposium. They feel the issue of family violence may be underemphasized.

- Government should define objectives before designing legislation and measure the effects of legislation after implementation. These outcomes are important.

- The group discussed the conflict between collective and individual rights and responsibilities, eg. family rights versus individual rights - how do we strike a balance?

- Some group members felt that families have become barriers to access to services, e.g. for abused children or spouses. This statement was contentious and several members did not agree with it.

- An overall concern was expressed about the process of the Symposium being used improperly - particularly with the structure of the small group sessions, ie. no chance for in-depth discussion or formulation of proposed policy.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Real life models have an impact on children and may be more important than packaged media materials. Media may be less real than some people believe.

- Violence in contact sports which sometimes glorify violence may have an influence on family values. In order to participate in organized sports, values taught by parents may have to be set aside eg. hockey coach encourages rough play, even though family values are less competitive and encourage abiding by the rules.

- "Hockey" mentality in intimate relationships, ie. okay to break the rules if it means you can win. This phenomenon was seen by the group as injurious to family values.

- The number of hours per week spent in television viewing takes away fun time which should be spent doing family activities.
- The origins of media contents are getting further away from family or community control. Frequently images are not relevant. As well, culture (Canadian or regional) is not being promoted in the media.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- The group generally agreed that increased income would have an impact on family problems. As well, unemployment is a causative factor in many family problems. Economic security lessens the impact of some family problems.
- Other group members expressed the view that dollars may not resolve the problems as a simplistic solution, eg. dollars may not be used appropriately
- This view was countered by other group members who stated that there is evidence that increased income (eg. pensions) helps to reduce social pathology eg. elderly spend dollars wisely; socio-economic factors have a major impact in the health area.
- The group suggested that governments target income programs at children. Many countries outside of Canada/US have major income programs aimed at families with children and single parent women
- Families (poor or not) have functions to perform and income programs should support that. How dollars are given is important - incentives to work have to be built in. Society should emphasize the development side of income support programs.

10. PARENTING

- All group members stressed the importance of consistency for children. A stable environment is important for all children.
- Children need interaction with a variety of individuals. Some concern expressed about the converse of "child proofing" types of programs.
- Children during first year have difficulty developmentally when in large day care settings. Governments need to look at policy in this area. Parental leave is an important factor in family and labour policy.

- There are costs to having children that go beyond dollars - e.g. career development. These persons who choose to be parents are being disadvantaged economically and frequently in career development if, for example, the parent decides to stay at home with young children.

- Society and its structures should recognize this and give it some value. We should have structures which do not judge parents who stay at home.

- Self-fulfilling prophecies should be guarded against - eg. children who go to day care will be "psychopaths". This creates notion that pathology follows from our preconceived ideas. Another self-fulfilling prophecy is that a child from single-parent family should be written off sooner. Society creates difficulties for certain groups just by its attitudes. The instruments of society tend to support those prophecies.

- Societal values are frequently biased towards nuclear families.

- The group unanimously agreed that education for parenting is an important area of family policy. The costs of some of these should be met as a matter of policy.

- Parents of special needs children have costs to pay for keeping children at home - there is little societal recognition of this.

- We need more basic services for parents staying in the home -we don't do much of this in Canada. These are basic support services not intrusive ones. These types of programs should be publicly supported.

- Recognition of volunteer time and effort is not given by society or government.

GROUP 17 **Facilitator: Otto Driedger**
Recorder: Pushpal Basu

The facilitator did not strictly follow the ten panel topic areas Instead, discussion focused on the following topics that were decided by the facilitator and the delegates using the broader perspective of the Family Symposium as the context.

The topics were:

1. Affordable Housing
2. Reduction of Poverty in Families
3. Families with children suffering from mental and/or physical disorder
4. Families looking after elderly people
5. Parenting and support policies/preventive services

1. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Large native families have difficulty finding affordable housing.
- Native families are discriminated in the rental housing market.
- Subsidized housing should be distributed across the city rather than ghettoized.
- Housing policy should try to integrate low-income housing into the middle and upper income housing to create a mixed neighbourhood.
- Generally speaking, affordable housing is not equipped to handle large families.
- Governments should provide more incentives for co-operative housing.
- Co-operative housing should also focus on large families and single parent families.
- So-called "affordable" houses have questionable standards and are often close to 'slum dwellings'.
- Slum landlords have earned a reputation for poor upkeep and maintenance of these houses.

2. REDUCTION OF POVERTY IN FAMILIES

- There is a lack of political will to provide financial support to families in distress.

- A majority of families headed by women are poor.

- Hungry children are the products of hungry families.

- There should be a legislated policy (nationally) that would force men to be more financially accountable for their children.

- Families receiving assistance from the Government may consider learning various money management techniques. The Government also has an obligation to make this training available.

- Government support - federal and/or provincial, for families in need should be directly related to the number of children in the family.

- Besides income tax, all other current and future taxes e.g. property tax, business tax should be tied to family income.

- Social expenditures should be on a more equitable basis and with more focus on the low income families.

- Minimum wage should be sufficient for a person to maintain a family above the poverty level.

- Participation of the business community in formulating any Government policies is important since they share the cost of Government expenditures.

- The Scandinavian model can be something we can learn from when considering ways of improving the conditions of families in poverty.

- Private business has yet to show leadership by taking measures that can reduce poverty in families.

- The reduction of poverty in families can not be achieved without a more equitable distribution of the wealth and demands a more socially responsible attitude from the business community.

- The cycle of poverty is perpetuated since Government support/assistance - already inadequate, drops in proportion to rise in family income.

3. FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM MENTAL AND/OR PHYSICAL DISORDER

- There are not enough programs that address the needs of adolescents who are victims of child abuse and/or family separation. Programs are also lacking for parents who have to cope with these children.

- Cuts in funding affect children with special needs and their families.

- Both the school authorities and the parents of children with mental and physical disorders, should consider peer counselling as an effective support tool for these children.

- More training, and more support services are needed for the children and their families in the post-institutional phase.

- The Social Services departments shoul take into account the children's physical, mental and cultural background when placing them into foster parents homes or other agencies. The departments should also be concerned when transferring guardianship of these children.

- Generally speaking, psychiatrists are not fully trained to deal with children suffering from mental problems.

- The social environment as such is not conducive for the children and their parents to address mental health problems openly. Potentially the victims and their families could be stigmatized.

- The Government rules and regulations that are there to facilitate care and services to children with physical and/or mental disorders, are perceived more as obstacles by the user of such services, i.e. parents.

- The dismantling of institutions by the Government is being viewed by the patients and their families as a simple cost-cutting measure. The Government view that the inmates of such institutions should be integrated back into the community for their own good, is also perceived as a promotional gimmick by the same people.

4. FAMILIES LOOKING AFTER ELDERLY PEOPLE

- Elderly people and the families looking after them share difficulties very similar to what have already been discussed under the previous topic: 3. FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN SUFFERING FROM MENTAL AND/OR PHYSICAL DISORDER.

Some of the common concerns are:
- lack of programs
- not enough funding to provide services for elderly with special needs
- the need for more specialized training for the psychiatrists
- progressively shrinking responsibility on the part of the Government to allocate more funds for institutionalized care for the elderly.

5. PARENTING AND SUPPORT POLICIES/PREVENTIVE SERVICES

- The school and the parents should prepare school age children to be ready for the real world.

- Communities should be viewed as a resource and could provide support to the children and their parents.

- School counselling should be able to provide more individualized services.

- "Parent-Aid" and "Teen-Aid" are good initiatives, but not always available.

- Since parenting is an important social issue, Government policies should consider the following:

    - flex time for working parents,
    - job sharing,
    - on-site Child Care facility, and
    - time-off for parents.

- Shopping malls should also have Child Care facilities for parents who can 'drop-off' their children while shopping.

- Day Care facilities are lacking standards.

- There should be formal advisory committees established with members consisting of the parents and school board to address issues related to parenting and its subsequent impact on the child's development.

- Government policies and expenditures do not reflect that support/preventive services in this area, are a priority.

- Support and service related information are not reaching the parents in the low socio-economic category. More creative methods should be explored by agencies that are either funding and/or delivering these services.

- Social agencies that provide support and services are not always accessible easily enough for parents.

- No co-ordinated approach towards crisis-intervention.

- The school is a non-threatening environment for a lot of parents. Social Service counsellors and Social Workers should use the facility to provide the following:

  - parenting education,
  - issues related to managing family budget, and
  - how to balance quality and cost.

CONCLUSION

the facilitator and the delegates summarized the panel discussion with the following points:

- Issues already known and too much time spent on sessions.

- More time should be spent on workshops.

- Children from poor families are the most disadvantaged.

- The school can be used as a community centre, however, this should not further burden the teaching staff.

- Employment policies should favour parenting and not penalize them.

GROUPS 18 AND 25 **Facilitator: Jeanna Baty**
Recorders: Gerry Jacob/Jim McIlmoyl

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Quality child care should be available to all children.
- In formulating policy it is important for governments to recognize the diversity of "family" - "family" has a multiplicity of definitions, i.e single parent, blended family.
- It is also important to recognize that because there are divergent interests and structures within families, application of generic policy will have a different impact on different family members.
- We require an overall assessment and evaluation of family policies and how polices may conflict with each other.
- Day care service needs are multi-generational. Assistance with day care is required for children, seniors, the handicapped and mentally ill.
- Family policy should take into account immigrant families.
- Poverty is unacceptable for families in Canada today.
- Research is required on the impact of immigrant value systems on Canadian families and family policy.
- Native input and control is essential for successful planning and delivery of legislation, research and programs for native people.
- Consultation, policy formulation and program delivery must involve recipients of the services.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Empower families by providing training and leadership skills to advocate for and to provide services to families. Empowerment involves access to resources, knowledge and skills.
- Programs should recognize skills and expertise that families possess to be able to resolve problems.
- Community and government resources should be channelled towards self-help groups.

- Service providers must begin to see families as the decision-makers. Their role is to provide consultation with rather than make decisions for families.
- We are all at some time givers and receivers of services.

- All service providers must receive training in multi-cultural aspects of families.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Redefine vulnerable families to include more than victims of violence and/or sexual abuse. Definition should include all families at risk: elderly, mentally ill, handicapped, families of incarcerated men and women (children born in jail, families at home), children of retarded couples (new phenomenon).

- Additional follow-up, support and treatment is needed for families after intervention. Include self-help and community support.

- We require a continuum of care that precedes and follows crisis intervention.

- Programs must address the context of families in which the troubled person resides, i.e. singular service to a victim is insufficient, the families of the victim and perpetrator require service, too.

- Strengthen mutual support and collaboration between recipients of service and "professionals".

- We need to recognize the therapeutic power of friendship.

- We need to recognize the expertise of volunteers.

- We must recognize that families require choices and alternatives rather than prescriptions.

- The role of service providers, including governments, is to ensure alternatives are available to enable personal choice of services.

- Programs and services should be designed to be inclusive rather than exclusive in nature.

- There needs to be greater recognition of the male as home maker.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Families should drive the health system rather than professionals. There needs to be more consultation with recipients of health services in planning and delivering service.
- We must redefine health services to concentrate on "wellness" rather than "illness".
- Emphasis on prevention must be tempered by the reality of need for acute care services.
- Poverty has close connection with poor health.
- NO POVERTY FOR CHILDREN BY THE YEAR 2000.
- We require prevention and early intervention by health service systems.
- We must prioritize health education.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- The larger community needs more input and involvement in education.
- Since only about 20% of learning takes place in school, there needs to be more regard for education in the workplace.
- There needs to be a new understanding of "community school", i.e. school needs to become a participant in the community beyond traditional classroom activities.
- Education is far more than school, a major portion of education takes place outside the classroom.
- Schools need to reach out into the community to provide extended curricular and extra-curricular functions in the community.
- Reorientation of the education system is necessary from the outset to include in the curriculum the following : life skills, sexuality, parenting, work life, health, recreation, relationships.
- In creative ways schools must inform families of curriculum content and expectations of children - must bridge cultural and language barriers to accomplish this.

- School buildings need to be accessible to the community beyond traditional school hours for a variety of functions including recreation activities.

- There needs to be more recognition of the non-curricular roles teachers play; if we are more demanding of teachers, then we should offer less criticism.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- We need to redefine "women's issues" in the workplace as "family issues".i.e. adequate child care is not only a "women's" issue.

- Employers need to increase flexible work options to accommodate family issues, i.e. job sharing, flex time, parental leave, day care, cottage industry (more work at home).

- It is important employers implement policies to prevent "worker abuse", i.e. fewer non-permanent positions, less contracting out.

- Employers must include the family in the definition of occupational health issues.

- Employee Assistance Programs must include the employee and the family.

7. LAW AND THE FAMILY

- Formulation of family policy must precede formulation of family law.

- Process of law reform to include community participation.

- Community and individual mediation instead of litigation.

- There needs to be an evaluation process for the judiciary as well as ongoing training. Life appointments should be eliminated.

- A cross-disciplinary review is needed to look at legislation and policy that subtly reinforces family vulnerability.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- We need to use the media as a support to community action, and train the community in the use of the media.

- We should utilize media personalities to highlight family issues.

9. **FAMILY INCOME**

- POVERTY CANNOT BE TOLERATED.
- Taxation laws must reflect the importance of the family by increasing exemptions or credits to include all aspects of care, i.e. child, handicapped, seniors.

10. **PARENTING TODAY**

- We need to implement laws that forbid the use of violence as punishment against children.

Group 19 **Facilitator: Rosemary Rippon/Graeme Fraser**
Recorder: Don Tourney

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Canadian families originate from varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Cross-cultural education in the school system needs to be emphasized more because of this.

- Canada's population base is aging. Governments need to recognize this and plan their social policy strategies accordingly.

- There are many different family structures in Canada. All need recognition and support.

- A national family policy should be developed that includes an extended definition of the family in its diverse forms.

- Families experiencing crisis situations need to have more practical support available to them. As an example, this could include more volunteer groups providing support to separated, divorced, or widowed persons who wish to re-marry.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Churches and school systems need to become more involved in the community to assist families. This should be done through partnership with government.

- Automation has affected people's attitudes - it is present everywhere. Older people are fearful of the effect automation could have on future generations.

- Barriers now exist between governments and families. More trust needs to be developed wherein families as lobby groups would be able to contribute in a more positive way to policies that governments formalize.

- Elected officials and civil servants fail to realize that they do not always represent the needs of the community. More consultation and involvement between governments and the community is needed. The "bottom up" approach needs to be emphasized and be put into practice by governments.

- More government funding is needed to provide improved community leadership for family issues/concerns.

- Governments must become more open to family concerns. If not, families may need to group together to co-ordinate and voice their concerns.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Less punishment and more help needs to be provided to families in trouble or on welfare.
- Douglas Besharov's presentation on this topic (child abuse and neglect) at the symposium was excellent. He explained the intricacies very well.
- Workshop delegates questioned whether the penal system is doing an effective job. Counselling appears weak. There are many repeat offenders.
- More and better treatment options are needed for offenders and for victims of abuse.
- Often, abused persons do not know where to go to get help. Departments of Social Services have not been as helpful as they could be. As an example, perhaps a pamphlet informing people where they can obtain help in cases of abuse could be included with some of the various cheques governments issue to people.
- Social Service departments and non-government agencies need to co-ordinate their efforts more effectively in this area.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- The native population requires more help in this area. The statistics on native rates of disease and death prove this.
- Preventive health programming is costly but very important. The question also arises of how much preventive health must people do on their own and how much government intervention should there be.
- Governments need to provide people with an improved awareness of the importance of proper nutrition.
- A "health help line" exists in the Netherlands. It has provided much needed help to many people, and could be adopted in Canada.
- Many people do not understand medical terminology. All people in the medical profession need to be instructed that they must speak to people using basic layman's language wherever possible.
- Too many pre-school children die of injuries each year. More parental education needs to be provided that will reduce the risk of injuries to children.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- In certain parts of Sweden, families attend school either to study together as a family or to receive individual education. The facilities are located in beautiful settings. The concept is unique and could be beneficial to Canadian families if implemented here.

- The education process should be less structured and more innovative so as to meet the needs of families as well as children. For example, older adults should be able to improve their reading and mathematical skills through integrated adult/child educational processes.

- Education needs to be emphasized as something that does not end when you leave school. It is an on-going process.

- Adult role models should be used more in the school system.

- Native and ethnic cultures should be presented to students in the school system. The native culture has been presented at Grenfell School (Saskatchewan). This was well received.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- More employers should provide child day care services on their premises.

- Low income families often times can not afford the cost of child day care, ie. part time wage earners. This is not a problem for welfare recipients who are entitled to full subsidy of their child day care fees.

- Free public transportation should be provided in the larger centres for adults and children utilizing child day care services.

- Governments only provide services to the public during normal working hours. This should be changed as governments also exist to serve the public. Businesses have extended working hours and governments should not be an exception.

- All employers need to be more innovative regarding the benefits they provide their employees. These benefits should recognize the needs of families to a greater extent. For example, provision of "family" as opposed to "employee" sick days; complete flex hours; provision for "crisis time" as a regular paid leave time and free transportation to and from home for midnight shift staff who need or request it.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The legal profession often times only considers the legal aspect of people's needs. Lawyers and judges tend to forget the social aspects of the cases they handle. This reduces the quality of service they provide.

- The native court worker program in Saskatchewan was a good program that should not have been terminated. It provided lay people with an opportunity to assist offenders at their particular educational level.

- The number of family breakdowns is increasing. Services needed by low income earners involved in those breakdowns have been cut back. Examples include: legal aid cut backs; termination of the court worker program; and less involvement by department social workers in family breakdown cases.

- A review of services provided by the Justice system is needed. ie. What affect have those services had on families and how effective are the services?

- In Nova Scotia, mediation services are provided at no cost for family breakdown, abuse, or neglect situation. The availability of this service has been well received in that province.

- Better laws need to be established for common-law relationships. Many families and particularly children suffer from the lack of laws for common-law relationships.

- Access to the legal system, in terms of time frames and cost, is a serious problem in our society.

- Legal reform in the absence of a sound coherent family policy is bound to fail.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Improved training in effective communication with other people is needed throughout our school system and in the work place.

- Television programs that portray "bad" moral characteristics can be turned into "good" communication exercises by families.

- The Canadian government should not allow free trade to interfere with the present quantity of Canadian produced television programming that is aired. This helps retain our Canadian identity.

- Working adults who come home tired from work can and should communicate with their families about their feelings. This can be done by expressing those feelings to the family in a positive rather than negative way.

- Families need to become more vocal and organized in their rejection of pornographic material available for sale.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Governments should make every effort to reduce the level of poverty that exists in Canada. This is possible based on the general affluence of our society.

- More and more employees are being placed on part-time rather than full-time work. There is need for a better benefits package for these people.

- The present welfare system does not provide an incentive for persons on welfare to become employed. This is because their welfare is reduced as their income increases. Also, welfare benefits are not taxable, whereas wages are taxable.

- The requirement of people having to "prove" their need for welfare is degrading to those people. Governments need to consider the dignity and feelings of people when they create laws for welfare recipients.

- Band councils should be permitted to administer all health and social service program needs of the native people. This local autonomy would provide the native people with services that are more responsive to their needs.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- Parenting needs to have a higher priority and profile in today's society. The preventive thrust should be emphasized. A lack of "proof" required to support this need should not be a major factor in the decision of government to accept or reject the principle.

- Family life education programs are needed in our schools and community organizations as core programs. These programs should be delivered by community- based Family Life Education personnel.

- Additional funding from governments that will provide staff training and facilitate for Family Life Education programs is essential.

- Human relations education and life skills training programs need to be expanded.

- Single parents are a concern in today's society. There are few training programs available to help them through their crises.
- Parenting programs for teenage mothers should be mandatory in all provinces.
- The man's role in parenting needs to be evaluated. The public also needs to be educated as to what their male and female roles are as parents.

GROUPS 20 + 34 **Facilitator: Sandra Simpson**
Recorder: Bonnie Durnford

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- There is no monolithic notion of the family, and policy should reflect that the family is evolving and flexible.
- Some needs of families have not changed, for example, the needs for stability and justice.
- The commonality of families should be maintained.
- Individuals need a sense of inclusion in family and society and in the community.
- The provision and design of housing should reflect a concern for family values and needs.
- For traditional families there is little government help to assist in maintaining "traditional" family life.
- Volunteerism is left to at-home mothers.
- All our support systems are geared to working parents.
- Current economics force parents to work.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Small centres of habitation are disappearing.
- Individuals are forced to leave small centres, for work, education, etc.
- The same problems exist in all urban centres, it is simply a matter of scale.
- In rural communities the support of neighbours is gone and there is nothing to fill in - no "psychological undertaker".
- There is no government support for individual businesses, there must be a mega-project to obtain government funding.
- In order to provide rural services, it is necessary that professionals, para-professionals and lay service providers live in the communities they serve.

- Pilot projects have been started in rural Manitoba to set up committees to establish a directory of support services, which was then distributed to professional service providers.
- We must build confidential resources in the community.
- In Manitoba, the independent weekly newspapers sponsored a seminar to discuss rural problems.
- It is important not to expect the solution of all problems to come from government.
- The centralization of all services has caused problems, diversification is necessary.
- We must encourage small industry.
- Single persons need to feel a part of both the community and the family.
- Both governments and communities are caught in a spiral of dealing with crises, rather than proactive planning for the future.
- There is a need for preventive services.
- In Canada, we do not seem to deal with the serious problems such as hunger and poverty.
- People need services to help them help themselves.
- We must consider all the implications of changes in our economic, financial and agricultural policies, as well as our social policies.
- Policies can also have the effect of destroying communities by affecting business, schools and families.
- Decisions are sometimes made with regard only to political motives.
- Government should monitor the banks' activity and regulate the way in which loans are made.
- We need more research and development to move from resource-based economy to a more widely based one.
- There must be more dialogue between governments and communities, a more cooperative approach must be developed.

- Both government policies and the service system have become compartmentalized and fragmented.

- The arts community can help to generate this dialogue between governments and communities, and can support an emotional and intellectual response to the problems and challenges facing families.

- Communities must have the basic necessities, that is, food, health care and housing. All policies should have this value base.

- Governments need family policy expertise to review all policies for their real impact on families. We do not need "band-aids". These experts should consult with the community and its members.

- Politicians should listen to communities and identify the needs of those communities.

- Communities must be empowered and this requires sufficient food and an end to family violence. Government must empower the communities, and to do so, must examine its fundamental beliefs.

- Governments depend on bureaucrats who can frustrate their political will. More input from the grassroots is needed to expand bureaucratic thinking. To do this, it will require that the grassroots shake off their apathy, and that politicians and bureaucrats get out of their offices to see the problems and share the expectations of ordinary families.

- Often, it is lack of government response that creates community apathy. People need confidence, self-esteem and skills to deal with government effectively. Often the people most needing services do not have these skills.
- Government must make itself accessible and hear what communities have to say. Government should give time to communities and honour its commitments. Communities should say "thank you" to government when it is appropriate to do so.

3. HEALTH AND FAMILIES

- Health care should be run by the public health system with hospitals as an adjunct.

- The public health system needs more money.

- Respite services should be available to assist families in caring for elderly, disabled and chronically ill family members.

- There are great regional disparities in the quality of health care.

- It should be noted that poor people are sick more often than those with adequate incomes, and that the health of families is impacted by other social ills such as inadequate nutrition and housing.

- We must create an environment which supports both physical and mental health.

- Transient doctor populations and travelling specialists can perpetuate peoples' health problems.

- Doctors have to use language which is understandable.

- We must ensure that hospitals are properly utilized.

- More effort is required to educate adults in healthy lifestyles.

- All the same health issues exist in the north and must be addressed.

- We should escape from the idea that experts are needed to provide every service. Government should facilitate the provision of services by and for the community.

4. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Governments have shifted the responsibility for identifying and dealing with social problems to the schools. Schools are only able to provide "band-aid" solutions.

- Schools are replacing families in teaching children basic skills and self-expression.

- Teachers have an overwhelming burden and have become co-ordinators rather than teachers.

- We must redefine the basic role of education and ensure that teaching is the teacher's **only** function, but that school is the place where social and health problems can be addressed by other professionals.

- Schools should not be expected to be society's doctors.
- Families rather than schools should be a refuge for a child. Parents must be given time to spend with their children.
- Children do bring their family's problems to school, so both schools and families should be refuges for children.
- Strengthening spousal relationships strengthens families. For this reason, marriage preparation classes should be available to all who want it, in whatever setting they want it. Marriage preparation can be a gateway to parenting education and to education for other life transitions that are experienced.
- Society sends mixed signals to our families and our children.

5. FAMILY INCOME

- Taxes should be based on family income rather than on individual income.
- Taxes based on individual income have helped women's independence.
- We must define what a family is; one criterion could be those people living in one household.
- The rules governing social assistance payment force couples to live apart.
- Regarding the universality of payments; they can be taxed back, and money can be shared better by the distribution of payments.
- Policies must support choice and assist families where one spouse remains at home.

GROUPS 21, 22 + 23 Facilitator: Larry Ohlmann
Recorder: Pamela Olson

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- The future implications of Canada's aging population for families will be:
  - The income security of aging families will be influenced by the fact that the majority of the aging population will be women.
  - Education regarding the aging process will be necessary to teach families what to expect, what is a normal aging process as opposed to an abnormal or unhealthy one needing support and/or intervention from health services.

- Regarding the health of families, we should facilitate entry into health care by diversifying the entry point from being predominantly by physicians (M.D.'s) to being possibly by public health nurses, psychologists, etc.

- The economic cleavage between the "haves" and the "have-nots" is becoming more and more pronounced. This is, in effect, reproducing the rigid class structure from which our ancestors fled to Canada. This is also creating a sort of "time bomb" that is bound to "explode" if allowed to continue.

- Government should undertake a study to examine how the ethnic and racial mix which is more and more prevalent in Canadian families influences intra and inter family relationships . Government services and policies need to address this issue in the multiculturalism mandate.

2. FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

- The church and the school have been described as the communities' key to family life because they are the places people meet together.
  - an example of how the church can serve its community is as a support service to Young Offenders. The people of the congregation become involved with young offenders through spending time with these youth. This is a growing and growth opportunity for the adults and the youth involved.

- If this kind of service is to be provided through these institutions:
  - Resources are sorely needed. i.e. training in human relations for teachers, support staff (remedial workers, social workers, psychologists) and a smaller teacher - student ratio (hire more teachers).

- **These resources are much needed but are dwindling because of the lack of structure provided to sustain them. Fewer and fewer families attend church.**

- How can we facilitate interrelationships in the community through school, church, or other organizations? Ideas include:

  - Examining ideas and educating people in an holistic frame work which includes concepts such as mind, body, spirit, community, family, school, past, present and future.
  - Deriving a sense of identity from our origins.
  - Developing friendships centres which can provide education for families and provide services off the reserve for native and non-native people.

- **We need to provide a sense of diversity between different ethnic groups and a bridge to help groups meet.**

- The curriculum in the schools should:

  - Touch upon the community, the home (family living) and the school. This is legislated but not carried out at a local level, possibly because of a lack of resources.
  - Include empowerment of the individuals in the family context which will facilitate the co-ordination and understanding between the family and the school.

- **The fewer resources there are, the more we need to support and facilitate the roles of each person involved.**

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- We need more funding for the development of programmes for abusing families, including victims, families and the abuser (usually also a victim).

- Helping such families would/could lower recidivism and permit the victims to suffer less.

- In the area of prevention, we should ensure earlier intervention in the school system (Grades 1 - 6), and put supports into the family rather then removing the victims.

- We need to change the power structures of society which allow pseudo-Christian ethics to dictate stereotypes such as:
  - 'A man must always be in control'.
  - 'Might is right'.
  - 'Spare the rod and spoil the child'.

- There is a greater and greater need for funding to help adult survivors of sexual abuse. The rate of adult disclosures overwhelming social services across Canada to the point that intake is closing down from lack of resources.

- We need funding policies that fund programmes rather than agencies. Funding agencies encourages the division of very related issues into separate problems and this is not good for needy clients.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Little was said or discussed about Mental Health during the symposium.

- There is a great need for education concerning sexuality and family life. This should be done through school curriculums and through the community:
  - by information sharing about needs and interpersonal skills.
  - by preventive health care.
  - Government funding is needed to promote people-power.

- The controversy about sex education and the local control that school boards have over the curriculum tends to undermine any importance/emphasis this aspect of education can be given.

- Family income is very closely linked to health problems.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- We must clearly define the school's mandate and then provide adequate resources to carry out this mandate. Private school focus on specific family needs and thus are depleting the public schools of public funding and the more vocal and active parents.

- Counsellors in schools need to be properly trained and have a clear role that is separate from a teacher's role.

- Education authorities should approve some designated curriculum for the home teaching of young children. This should provide support and freedom to parents who want this for their children and give them access to the same resources as teachers have in the public system.

- There is a need to articulate a clear "vision" that society can work towards, similar to the "participaction" vision of several years ago, ie: "no poverty for children by 2000 A.D."
  The setting of such targets helps us to achieve goals and sensitizes the general population to these issues.

- Nutrition as related to education is related to family poverty.

- Many children miss breakfast or lunch near the end of each paycheck period and this affects their performance.

- Mandatory lunches should be offered in schools.

- Society needs to examine its priorities if we want to care for our own.

6. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- Businesses use reactive solutions rather than proactive or preventive practices in dealing with employees.

- For example, corporations could become societal supporters through funding and activism.

- Employee Assistance Programs must take care of and be responsible for employees even though the "bottom line" of budget is a consideration.

- The labour force of the 21st century will drastically change because of age and demographic changes and will force new recruiting practices to be developed.

- Values:

  . We must use the media to promote awareness and action.
  . Go beyond stating values to implementing significant change, ie: filling the gap between perceived needs and Government funding.

- Taxes:

  . It is the middle income earner who pays more taxes - ew must determine who is responsible for funding.

- Donations to charitable organizations are not deductible and so people assume that Government can fund them. It is the organizations that lose out.
- We must ensure the prudent use of tax dollars, ie: mega-projects do not have that big of a dollar return on society.

7. LAW AND THE FAMILY

- How can more legislation produce real and positive change for the family?

- Courts and politicians are not meeting their responsibilities to the family, ie: there is no clear definition of "family".

- "Problem" families or families with interpersonal problems are not helped by increased legislation... they need other options such as mediation.

- Those people who run the systems, ie: legal system are those that this system allowed to survive. They are thus highly resistant to changing the system.

- The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is seen as the biggest single threat to the family, in that it:

  - promotes selfishness as opposed to selflessness.
  - promotes the rights of the individual as opposed to rights of the family as a whole.

- The rights of the individual must be tempered with with responsibilities.

- We must develop a "watchdog" for the rights and interests of the family...
  ie: a minister in charge of family affairs who would discuss the policies of other departments, (taxation, finance, etc.) that have an important impact on the family.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN THE FAMILY

- The media must be held responsible for communications aimed at influencing the family, ie: it can provide alternative role models such as in "My Two Dads".

- Television watching by a family contributes to the breakdown of communication skills in a family; ie: instead of being in relationships with each other, each individual focuses his energies on the TV, radio, etc.

- Television can be used to promote dialogue, depending on how people learn to use it.
- General concepts can be promoted on Television (such as values) through good program planning.
- It is the population as a whole that determines what we see on Television through the ratings.
- Pornography (and related issues such as abortion and homosexuality) were not discussed at the symposium because of the perceived fears of discussing moral issues, but they are strongly related to family issues.
- The easy access to pornographic videos and to adult movies shown in prime time encourages more violent assaults and rape.

PREVENTION: We need to develop strong families in order to facilitate the learning of decision-making strengths in children.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- The biggest issue is that of Guaranteed Annual Income versus income supplements to eradicate poverty levels.
- Individuals have very strong feelings on this issue.
- Social policies versus economic impact of this issue directly affects the family.
- Government must decide what it's objectives are...Is dealing with poverty a priority?
- A move towards income supplement should be made gradually.
- The economic tax base (middle class) is disappearing, and the two extremes, rich and poor, are taking over.
- Families need a dignified financial security.
- The threat made by changing laws to retirement income built up by 30 years of is different from the threats to the family allowance made by changes in taxation policies.
- Stronger foreign economies will force Canada to become more competitive through changing taxing policies.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We need early education for young people about what it means to be a parent as a means of prevention. This should include information on married life, finances and family responsibilities.
- Young parents need continuing education about parenting and support from the community.
- Health is a social commodity - parents enter into a social contract when they become parents.

NOTE

The Symposium has provided a good beginning for some direct communication. Participants will now be anticipating some actions by the Premiers as a result.

GROUP 26 **Facilitator:** **Ray Barnard**
Recorder: **Allan Schachtel**

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Because of the various family structures (i.e., blended, extended, homosexual couples), we need a definition of "family" to help determine family needs and policies.

- Family types could include corporate family, national, nuclear, and community family.

- Our definition of "family" will help to determine what we do with families.

- Should homosexual/lesbian families be allowed to adopt?
  . Our definition will help to determine the answer.

- Our policies regarding families will affect what services will be provided.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Families need to be supported in various ways including both government-funded and voluntary efforts.

- We should be tapping the services that seniors can provide to families, for example, simulated extended families.

- There is a big debate around the issue of who organizes senior volunteer services - government or others? Who should fund or provides financial incentive to seniors? Any volunteer efforts usually have associated costs.

- Should government fund the co-ordination of services or should individuals and the community take the initiative?

- We need to explore ways to facilitate volunteerism in providing services to families.

- How do we promote more of a "brother's keeper" type of attitude toward providing services to families in need?

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- We must move toward native self-government to produce real changes with native families.

- "Community" and "connectedness" values need to be nurtured. Government must recognise this when developing policy.

- Families are changing and traditional values need to be reviewed (i.e., the extended family is no longer viable for mobile modern families).
- Our material values dictate that families need more than one breadwinner.
- Throwing money at family problems does not solve them. We need to re-instill some traditional values of helping each other, sharing, etc., at all levels of community, church, and school.
- What is going to happen when the baby boomers reach retirement age? There will be a large loss in tax revenue as well as an increased demand for senior citizen services due to the population bulge of persons over 65 years.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- People are remaining healthy for a longer period of time and the expected life span is ever increasing.
- There is a need for an improved level of mental health functioning whereby people feel better about themselves.
- There need to be more social supports as this will affect mental health functioning as well as physical functioning.
- There is a need to promote healthy functioning in all areas for all age and family types.
- Industry and corporations need to take more responsibility for the general health of their employees.
- All employers need to promote health by the development of appropriate employment policy and practices (i.e., more options regarding hours of work to suit the individual needs of families).
- We must recognize the relationship between poverty and poor health, poor social functioning, high birth rates, abuse and violence, and act accordingly.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Education professionals must take more responsibility in promoting healthy living and relationships as they have a captive audience and can provide early identification of problems.

- Young adolescents are particularly vulnerable as they are caught up with materialism and consumerism. This has led to youth leaving school and engaging in employment before completing their education.

- School administrations are caught in the political system (i.e., elimination or reduction in the fine arts whenever there is a cutback in programs or services).

- Education seems to be geared towards teaching marketable job skills rather than improving lifestyles, teaching values, promoting the notion of service, promoting richness in life rather than riches.

- There need to be more opportunities for work experience for those children not suited for the academic stream in our school system.

- We need to promote volunteer community services as a way of learning some basic helping skills.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- There should be more options available to employees in relation to hours of employment, time off for family concerns, (i.e., job share arrangements, etc.).

- Employers should make provision for variable work hours, related to the needs of both employees and clients.

- Child day care services should be available at the work place.

- Our definition of work should include more than financial compensation. It should reflect meaning for both the the self and others; work should be an opportunity to serve and to be appreciated for that service.

- Work must not be equated only with money. It must include the opportunity for growth, the development of self-esteem, and the opportunity to serve others and gain a sense of individual worth.

- We need to find a way to assess the cost of work in relation to the family. How does a family cope with the need to work?

- How are different types of work valued? For example, the role of mother and homemaker versus that of paid employee?

- What is the effect of unemployment on the family?

- Under Employment Equity legislation, should older employees make room for younger employees by early retirement? How does this affect someone's right to work and continue to make a worthwhile contribution?

- Perhaps there need to be more options available, for example, older employees could reduce their work hours according to their needs and abilities and could thereby make opportunities available for younger employees, minority employees, etc.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- This presentation could have dealt with a wider scope of legislation that affects families (example: Young Offender's legislation, etc.)

- Is our justice system really serving average families and individuals, or is it a forum for lawyers to do their own thing and for the rich to be able to manipulate?

- Should courts order treatment services for offenders?

- If so, there are not enough treatment programs available, especially for violence and sexual abuse treatment.

- There should be more services for victims and their families.

- There currently is no legislation to protect elder abuse.

- Native people would like to see changes regarding the apprehension of native children, adoption practices, a registry for information on adoptions, and contacts for legal age adoptees.

- Native families have only recently begun to be able to parent their own children, due to the previous practices of residential schools and child welfare apprehensions.

- There should be a national Child Welfare Act to empower native people to address their own concerns about the welfare of their children.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- We need to learn to use the media effectively to promote healthy living and family lifestyles.

- Schools should be teaching basic communication skills, in regard to family relationships, etc.

- We need to recognize the negative effects of too much television, for example, violence, etc.
- We need to priorize some time from busy work schedules for daily communication with the members of our families.
- We need to learn to use our time effectively, to develop communication and relationship skills with our children.

9. **FAMILY INCOME**

- Current priorities reflect our society's desire for wealth rather than meaningful relationships and communication.
- There is too much "chasing the Joneses".
- The living standards we expect create demands that impact on families, for example, the need for double incomes, etc.
- Rates of financial assistance need to be sufficient and should be geared toward re-employment and self-sufficiency.

10. **PARENTING TODAY**

- We must begin to strengthen parenting skills in every possible way (including basic parenting skills being taught in schools).
- Some families (parents) have not had an opportunity to experience or learn any parenting skills and therefore must be taught them in order to pass them on to their own children.
- It is imperative that both parents and children begin to learn these basic skills, that is, communication skills relationship building skills, sharing, etc.

GROUPS 27 AND 28 **Facilitator:** June Wick
Recorder: Bernadette Holzer/David Macknak

1. OVERALL CONCERNS AND STATEMENTS

- That these recorded messages not be changed or edited.
- The belief that individual rights are in conflict with family rights is an assumption, and most of the group felt that it was not necessarily so.
- Does the family need to be strengthened? Or should we strengthen the relationship of the family with societal structures. For example: The reality is, most children are cared for by many people besides their parents. - Should we strengthen these links?
- All people need to be empowered. We should break through the patriarchal family where only some people are empowered.
- A working definition of family must include the living alone elderly.
- We need to look further at "poor" families.
- There was a lack of people at the conference with first hand experience, we need people here with first hand experiences.
- There was a need for multi-cultural representation at the conference.
- Single people without children were not represented.
- We need a social analysis of the causes of family problems.
- We assume every new parent knows how to parent:
  - There is a need for much parenting training. The need for information is a form of poverty.
  - There is a great need for support for all parents.
- Solutions include community involvement, neighbours, expanded home care, parent aides.
- We need to recognize the diversity of the ways people live -for example, single mothers with grown children living across Canada.
- People from the groups being served, must learn to be servers, even female counsellors may counsel from a patriarchal perspective.

- Federal/Provincial wrangles over who funds what, gets in the way of developing services.

- Solutions to problems tend to reproduce or reinforce the problems. For example: When helpers from "one up" in the hierarchy - provide the help - empowerment does not occur.

- We should look at the family as a function, not just at which people make up families.

- Old and young are both vulnerable because they are not well-represented in the labour force.

- Value in our culture is dependent on one's role in the labour force. Poor pay for caretakers of children and the elderly reflects the value we put on this work, and the people who do it.

- We need to find ways of valuing work not done in the monetary economy, for example, child care.

- Under-funding occurs because we do not value contributions to non-monetary economy.

- As long as we (family support programs) compete with traditionally valued programs, for example, defense funding, these services will be underfunded.

2. HOW DO WE ESTABLISH OUR PRIORITIES?

- Services to "vulnerable" families need to grow out of and be delivered from a neighbourhood base, and should be varied.

- Attendance at programs should not stigmatize people.

- Programs should be integrated - for example, Health, Education and Social Services should be integrated in some areas, thus decreasing competition for funds and the duplication of some services. Preventive programs need to be aimed at everybody, this recognizes that we are all vulnerable.

- Child-rearing is a community responsibility!

- Program development should be driven by an overall philosophy about families, one we all know about and understand, even if we do not all totally accept it. From this we would formulate an overall family policy. Programs need to be more proactive rather than reactive.

- Education and support are both important for families - having information (knowing) may be different from being able to use that information (understanding). People need to be helped to make informed choices.

3. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Education is a life long process.

- Information and support programs need to leave people feeling good about themselves - this empowers people to be able to solve their own problems.

- The education systems could develop better ways of supporting the development of unique individuals.

- We need collaboration between government departments and the movement of budgets beyond classical categories.

- Basic education needs to be available to everyone, for example, the northern areas of provinces do not necessarily offer Grade XII.

- Education systems need to be open to new ideas, for example, we could pay high school students to get needed Grade XII classes before they sever their connection with the school system.

- Because government policy affects education (from elementary school to university) and vice versa, it is important it examine and correct the biases of our education curriculum, for example, there is a sexist leaning to some subjects.

- We would like to see a linking of social and economic goals through education. Example: The effects of poverty on people in an economics class.

- A reminder, the majority of people do not go to university.

- The trend in education (perhaps because of financial cutbacks and involvement of employers in funding) is for employment rather than academic skills to be emphasized.

- We need to further legitimize learning that does not occur in traditional classroom settings, for example, experience, television, communication with and within families, social skills.

- Regarding education, native people may have the necessary ability but money is not being provided to train them in specific skills to make them employable.

4. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Communication skills should be taught and can be taught.
- We should be taught skills which will help us when we are no longer employed.
- On the other hand, listening skills need to be developed in that segment of society that cannot hear messages which have already been given for years. For example: What have the poor been telling us?
- "The pain of living in this world." - Teenage suicide is a clear statement about this.
- There was opposition expressed to use of the phrase "vulnerable families" - we are all vulnerable.
- Isolated families - handicapped children, multi-cultural families and the wealthy may have special needs.
- Violence needs to be studied and discouraged at many levels.
- Generalization about families is dangerous.
- Support but not a consensus was expressed for the Vanier Institute definition of the family. Definition: "any combination of two or more persons who are bound together by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption placement and who, together, assume responsibilities for variant combinations of some of the following: physical maintenance and care of roup members; addition of new members through procreation or adoption; socialization of children; social control of members; production, consumption and distribution of goods and services; and, effective nurturance."

5. THE HEALTH OF FAMILIES

- Health is important to many government departments beyond Departments of Health, for example, Highways.
- Emphasize pro-active rather than reactive planning in this area (without eliminating the reactive programming).
- Programs need to be accessible and relevant to the recipients.
- We must promote health, in addition to preventing illness.
- We have a responsibility for providing information but also the tangible resources so as people can act on the information.

- We need to address poverty, physical and mental health.
- Government budgets can support improved health services if spending priorities are readjusted.
- We need to ensure universal access to health care.
- Health care does not necessarily mean doctors and hospitals, it also means home care, nutrition, etc.
- We note with concern that the medical profession "heals" what they are "paid" to treat - therefore the payment system controls service delivery. The public needs more say in health care.
- We see a need for widening the number and scope of entry points into the health care system (include mental health). We must redefine "mental health".
- We want more acceptance of people other than health professionals defining health needs.
- Mental and physical health begin prenatally.
- We suggest a subsidy for "home care" services provided by families.

6. LAW AND FAMILIES

- There is a need to change laws to better serve all people.
- There is a need to educate Judges in social issues.
- We should also change society so that some laws are not necessary.
- We must look at how the law does not serve some segments of the population, for example, women.
- We suggest developing alternatives to the traditional legal system.
- For example: the adversarial approach versus mediation (How can lawyers trained in adversity approach "quickie courses" in mediation?)
- We need new alternatives to problem solving, other than by legal means.

- The Justice system is not accessible:
  - . financially
  - . psychologically
  - . in terms of its timing
- Women need to have right to choose - whether or not have or not have an abortion.
- We note with concern the waiting list for legal aid time taken to get hearings - and the public unawareness of Canadian Law.

7. WORK AND FAMILIES

- The Panel presentation was weak, narrow and did not give recognition to workers.
- Government policy needs to support paid parental leave to attend to family needs.
- Work is not the same as employment. Societal policies need to address the issues of work and the value of work.
- Places of employment have a responsibility to support child care.
- We need to find ways of valuing work equally and eliminate the hierarchical valuing of types of work.
- We need to pay attention to equal pay for equally skilled jobs.

8. FAMILY INCOME

- Fear about G.A.I. (Guaranteed Annual Income) - could become G.I.A.I. (Guaranteed Inadequate Annual Income).
- Two persons working in a family still does not assure money above the poverty line. We need to think about the impact of this on families - and about the number of working poor.
- Benefits need to be legislated for part-time workers.
- Tax policy must not be regressive and thus erode support to families.
- Tax-backs should only affect those people who can afford to pay for services (universality). For example, family allowance should remain a universal program, and be taxed back from people with higher incomes.

- There is a need to coordinate all services to families at the community level.

COMMENTS

- Delegates would like to see this dialogue carried on in the community, so that the views of people might be amplified and thus create a stronger message for the Premiers.

- Delegates did not have sufficient input into the conference process. Panels' presentations were really lectures, thus this 2-1/2 hours was really the only opportunity for input.

GENERAL

- Proposals and recommendations to deal with family issues are available in abundance.

- Governments and policy makers need to listen and become more open to these proposals - even though the proposals may not fit their image of what issues and problems are.

- This conference has been really about social welfare issues in Canada today: Spousal abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, communication, effects of media, poverty, child care, substance abuse, native issues, etc. There has been nothing startlingly new in what has been said. It is decisions that are required.

- What assurance have we that action will result from the Symposium?

- How do we make the Premiers accountable? There are no answers, but this concerns the need of conference delegates to see action - or conference-going begins to become just futile activity.

- Delegates want to receive transcripts, including those of these discussion sessions, quickly.

- Concern was expressed that condensing ideas will water down the concerns and recommendations.

- It will be good if there is lots of repetition in delegates comments, politicians need to hear that for emphasis.

- Concern was expressed over the lack of structured networking opportunities. For example, we could have had a room set aside for anyone wishing to discuss a particular topic.

- We recommend conferences on families be held at the regional and community level (on families), and that all delegates should carry their ideas and concerns back to their home and work communities, (work and home).
- Questions were raised about there being too much security at the conference.
- Overall, delegates had positive feelings about the symposium.

GROUP 29 **Facilitator: Linda Drew**
Recorder: Richard Deutscher

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Research into family violence is required to identify factors that may be indicators of violent situations. Factors to investigate could include:
  - . marital relationship, i.e. married, common-law, separated, etc.,
  - . alcohol or drug abuse, and
  - . income of family members.

- When this research is planned, consideration should be given to how the resulting information will be disseminated.

- Canada is a land where people of many different ethnic origins have come together. There has to be an increased awareness of language barriers and cultural differences so that the trauma that results from misunderstanding of cultures can be avoided in the areas of Health, Justice, and Social Services. Education for caregivers, teachers, and policy makers, who deal with inner cities, should be a priority.

- There has to be increased flexibility in the policies that affect families. There is an emphasis on policies for exceptional cases and there are not enough policies for guiding service delivery to the general population. As a result, many people cannot access the services they require.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

Health and Social Services Departments of Provincial Governments must encourage the mobilization of communities as follows:

- Within each community, there should be a committee comprised of business, church, service organization, and aboriginal leaders who identify health and social issues in their community, prioritize the issues and develop strategies to address the issues. The committee would identify itself through the media, get out and talk to residents, identify what the community can do, and set community priorities. As plans are put into action, an evaluation of plans and actions to assess results would be required. In this committee, business should be expected to take on a leading role using the skills and resources that it can access.

- Parents should be involved in family life and sex education, not just the experts in the school system. These matters are a joint responsibility, and the patronizing of parents must stop. Parental confidence has to be restored by teaching parents to be the educators for family life. Parenting programs (to teach parents of all socio-economic groups the art of parenting) are an important primary prevention strategy and should be viewed by governments as a funding and program priority.

- Government organizations should include "consumers" in the planning and implementation of their programs. People want to stand on their own, and can contribute.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- There has be to an increase in the numbers of front line workers (e.g. public health nurses, social workers) to deal with the problems of violence and abuse in families. Currently there is not enough time for thorough investigation of these problems. One reason often cited for non-reporting of situations is the frustration resulting from the lack of action following previous investigations. Better mechanisms have to be in place to ensure that there is follow-up to reported problems.

- Improved education of personnel who investigate and deal with family violence is required for better understanding of family violence issues. Victims in shelters need to feel welcome in the situation into which they have been forced.

- The judiciary should be educated so that more realistic and stringent sentences are give to perpetrators, and so that a clear message is delivered as to the gravity of crimes of family violence and abuse.

- Native independence and self-government must be promoted and achieved to facilitate alleviation of the problems facing aboriginal families.

- More shelters and programs are needed in rural areas. More community based programs are required.

- The justice system must work treatment into the probation or sentencing of a perpetrator. Examples of behaviour modification are important to prove that the cycle of violence and abuse can be broken. Efforts should be taken to ensure that the perpetrator is removed from the home, and not the victim(s).

- Government departments should ensure that before funding is granted to an agency or non-governmental organization, a check on who else is providing similar services should be completed. The goal should be to ensure that co-operation is achieved, and that fragmentation and competition among service providers and duplication of service delivery are avoided.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Information should be provided to community groups so that they learn how to lobby for change and can develop strategies. Groups have to know who to see, and how to talk to bureaucrats and politicians. This information is available, as indicated at the symposium, (refer to paper by Dr. Jane Fulton) and should be provided to community groups.

- Departments of Health should put injury and accident prevention on their agenda for public education. Accidents are the leading cause of death among our young people.

- To improve the health of families, first their basic needs must be met - poverty must be seriously addressed. Emotional needs of individuals must also be taken into consideration, as well as their physical needs. When policies are developed, the correlation between income and health has to be considered.

- Provincial Governments should have a "Healthy Public Policy" Branch looking at the health implication of policies across government departments.

- Policies should be viewed with an holistic approach, i.e. they should address the physical, emotional, and social needs of the people served.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Schools should be more inviting, encouraging parents to come in and participate in their children's education. Society must stop putting too much responsibility on schools, and keep it with the parents. All partners in education should be involved in curriculum development (e.g. parental input is required in curriculum development).

- Governments should support public education to a greater extent and stop the fragmentation that exists because of the offering of support to many special interest groups.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Businesses should be more involved in discussions on family life, as this is a powerful group that could help in many ways. There is a definite need to explore this area in more depth.

- Employers must have a change in attitude so as to become more responsible for the well-being of their employees and their employees' families.

- The stigma has to be removed from women choosing to stay home to care for their children. They are a rich resource with many talents and are invaluable in volunteer/community work. There should be increased support for women re-entering the workforce after staying home for a number of years.

- Realistic policies for Child Care are required. Canada must come to a consensus on what the National Strategy for Child Care is. Too many varying opinions and provincial disparities exist.

- More corporate responsibility for Child Care should be encouraged.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- In many cases, judges and lawyers do not understand the legislation that has been established regarding families. Too many personal prejudices, for example, feelings on a child's perception, enter into legal decisions. Education is required to inform lawyers and judges as to the legislation and as to the real issues in what they are dealing with. Attorneys-General and Ministries of Justice should set minimum requirements for in-service education of judges and lawyers.

- Mediation requires a greater thrust as it will work in many cases. It empowers the weaker of two partners to become equal, which is not always the case in the courtroom.

- Continued support must be provided to the poor through our legal aid systems.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- Technology and the media should be used to reach and teach - an example of the potential can be seen in the commercials sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Governments could provide subsidies and/or tax breaks for cable networks and television stations that run family oriented programs and commercials.

- Government departments should evaluate their media material. Money spent on pamphlets and other written media might be better invested in radio and television announcements and programs.

9. **FAMILY INCOME**

- The minimum wage for individuals should be tied to the poverty line.
- Effective mechanisms for women going through the transition of a separation or divorce are required to help them deal with and re-adjust to their new life circumstances.
- Policy makers in governments must understand poverty.
- Adequate child tax credits, regardless of income, are required. TERRENCE HUNSLEY made reference to a $3500 per year child tax credit. There have to be ways to ensure that the children benefit from these tax credits.
- Support payments up to a certain level should not be taxable. Indexing for inflation and age should be built into payments.
- The bottom line here is to eliminate child poverty.
- The role of families in caring for handicapped and elderly members should be recognized financially through tax credits.
- Governments should review policies for the support of various socio-economic groups at large and redistribute funding to the needy. For example, provision of benefits to seniors, particularly those with extreme wealth, should be re-considered.
- There should be an emphasis on policies and programs for prevention services and an assurance of funding availability.

10. **PARENTING TODAY**

- There is a lot of emphasis nowadays on pre-natal classes. There is a logical extension from this to parenting classes, which should be emphasized in the immediate post-natal period and throughout the early years of parenting (e.g. pre-school years of the child). Perhaps it is time to start calling pre-natal classes parenting classes.

- Refreshing ideas for parents are needed to help them in their responsibilities. Resources should be developed for people with lower-level reading skills. Materials developed should be something that people can identify with, and as such, must be culturally appropriate.

- Regarding the research and development of resources, a lot of material and information is available. This should be shared between provinces. There should be better inter-provincial accessibility to resource centres, perhaps through a national clearinghouse. Video presentations are the most effective educational tools, and development of video materials should be encouraged.

11. SUMMARY SUGGESTIONS

- At future symposiums, panels should include successful parents who have weathered crises. They can describe the strengths they did or did not have to cope with situations and talk about where they went for help. Also, panels should have more representatives from the clergy and senior citizens.

- Governments should consider tax deductions for marriage enrichment courses. Strong marriages will yield solid families.

- This group suggests that the Symposium about Families should become a regular, possibly an annual forum. We applaud the provincial and federal governments for their sponsorship.

GROUP 30 **Facilitator: Sandra Devon**
Recorder: Cindy Seibel/Orest Gulaga

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- What is happening to women working outside the home and leaving home because home and career are too much? Some related questions were raised:

  - Is there a lack of support for working mother?
  - Is there a need to review all current family programs?
  - Are current family programs relevant?
  - Are they reflecting new information available regarding the "families" of today? For example, does a homosexual couple raising a child find support services?

- Many delegates in this workshop were social service workers--government and non-government. As a consequence our view of families may be skewed. For example, as social service workers we serve a small portion of families. By the nature of our jobs we exclude vast numbers of families, the business sector and do not address the needs of all families.

- As an approach, should we make policy first, ie. stake out a position and seek input? No, our position is that we need input from people first.

- Policy makers need to consider that we could have a skewed point of view given we work with problem families.

- We need to look at well families to develop family policy and ensure that we are not overly intrusive.

- We need flexibility in programs and approaches when it comes to family policy. Policy needs to define where line between advantaged and disadvantaged is.

- We need to ask does this policy create disadvantaged families? For example, currently, many services are only accessible through child and family services acts which create labels and stigma.

- We need family policy at every level of government. In this conference not all government levels, funded NGO's and families participated in the symposium.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- Why was there no any specific discussion on rural families at the symposium?

- Many rural families have to relocate or travel to cities for service. This creates other problems, for example, a lack of a family support system.

- Do rural communities provide better support (community)? This is debatable. For example, there is support for accepted problems such as the elderly, but not for unaccepted problems such as substance abuse and family violence. This is not known or kept from the community.

- We need to mobilize communities, for example, as federal government did with "Healthy Cities". Churches, schools, and so on, could help in the community to support families more and this role needs to be encouraged.

- There is only so much time volunteers can give - they have families too - we can push everything back on the volunteers. This does come down to individual choice. Family structure also dictates volunteer activity in a two-parent family, often one volunteers. Voluntarism is more difficult for a one-parent family.

- We need to get business and government involved in community support programs for the family as well.

- Strong families need to "bring in" all families and help support them. For example, invite them for dinner and include them in a network where everyone benefits.

- Scouts Leaders help as role model for single parents.

- De-institutionalization of children and adults has brought new pressures on their families:

  . there is a reluctance to provide support to families of these children
  . we need to recognize need for financial support and recognize that some policies promote segregation

- Schools are now doing more for special needs children in their own community.

* **There is a need for respite services, for example, for little children and special needs children. We provide respite for institution workers but do little for families.**

****Current government structures promote segregation, as a consequence we have "turf protection" and the family may get tossed around because of government need to specialize.**

- One possible remedy is provided in a British Columbia example where British Columbia is considering single access - single case management.

3. **SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES**

- Access to Services:
  - . we create vulnerable families by not providing access and forcing stress and trauma
  - . stigma attached to violence also limits access
  - . we need access for all groups. This actually may be more difficult for the middle class and upper class

- We are all a vulnerable family in one way or other and our policy must deal with all families.

- We need to recognize in our policies that no class differential exists for many problems (e.g. violence, alcoholism).

- We need to make all groups comfortable in accepting service, regardless of family income.

- In many upper income families, either the child fits the parent's vision or is on the street. Parents don't throw out the myth of family, they throw out the child instead.

- We need supports developed for families of de-institutionalized children and adults (eg. respite, training).

- Home Care is a great invention - wide range of support, for example, room for lots of cottage industry - part time work especially for assisting seniors in own homes.

- At home seniors should be encouraged to attend special occasions at seniors' facilities (special care homes, etc.).

....

* policy emphasis
**very strong policy and practice statements

*** We should try to design services that are flexible and address individual needs - eg. provide services in own home (to some degree - home care does this).**

- Society cannot always afford only individual services. There are also advantages to group programs eg. sharing of parenting ideas.

- Sometimes we use group programs to control costs when we should be controlling entrance.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- We should be teaching emphasis on healthy lifestyles in our schools:

  . if there is a comprehensive curriculum children will internalize the information and make healthy choices
  . must start in kindergarten
  . we have seen this impact on smoking
  . healthy life styles should be a core subject

- It is important to teach family life education - more than sex education - how to care for family members, responsibility, how families change. One such example - Quest Program (promoted by Lions Club) - provides skills for adolescents and lifestyle education.

- We need to drink more water and have water in classrooms. There are some simple things that need to be promoted:

  . bathroom needs should be accepted part of life instead children are often taught to schedule (eg. recess, lunch time) and are not allowed to go during class time

- Integrated health programs need to be developed to consider all aspects including social and emotional aspects. To often when we consider health we only consider physical health.

- Government should identify specific dollars for prevention. We need more than lip service, we need an investment.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- We need multiple use of schools as they are available many hours when they are not in use.

- We need to teach life skills, for example, such things as food choices and consumerism.

- A separate program with its own curriculum for life skills needs to be implemented.

- Schools should welcome parents and make themselves congenial places.

- We need more distance education to reach families where they are.

- We see home economics classes being whittled out, but home is not just cooking and sewing, but also family education.

- Girls are not choosing home economics. They are choosing industrial arts or cosmetology because we have demeaned home economics.

- Since we all have to do some kind of homemaking we need to have opportunities and encouragement to learn it.

- In Manitoba the fastest growing area within home economics is family studies (child development, parenting, course on family). The students are choosing this and decision makers need to listen.

- School could be the place to attack the myth of family and to let children know it is O.K. to have emotions, problems and needs.

- Children are scared of adulthood and are interested in things such as marriage preparation.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- We need flexibility of programs, employment policies, etc., to address today's families.

- Respite services for different families need to be widely available.

- We need support for men to become involved in family life - especially the other parent of now single-parent families.

- Our scope needs to be broader than just to focus on women's issues.

- We have not done a good job of educating adolescent males. We present options to girls, but boys still believe wives will look after them.

- We need role models that help boys and girls with new family life.

- Some individuals can make work choices to blend work and families; policies should support this.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Manitoba example with respect to older men divorcing and remarrying younger women:
  - . the ex-wife gets the children and child support until they are 18, and short-term (2-3 years) support for herself to train and/or establish an income
  - . the ex-wife often ends up in poverty
  - . on the other hand, the husband and new wife have stable income with same standard of living
  - . this law is bad and should be reviewed

- Alberta example regarding the problems with widow's pension:
  - . Canada Pension Plan is available to widows but not to single parents
  - . we need a realistic message to young girls - "be prepared, you could end up in this situation"

- Children are currently interested in the law. They want to know how laws affect their lives and we should provide information.

- Young Offenders Act:
  - . the Act is not the problem, it needs money to put teeth into it
  - . there are issues around probation, not enough law enforcement to follow it up, therefore, YOA workers are approaching Child Welfare workers to provide services.

- Manitoba example regarding family violence:
  - . In Manitoba it used to be that women could be held in contempt if they were unwilling to testify against a batterer, now police prosecute and request co-operation.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- We are using multi media (T.V., electronics, computers) to facilitate family growth, but these are not available to all families.

- There is concern about what is on T.V. - people watch commercials, often with strong sexual messages. Do we have a way to critically analyze messages?

- We have a responsibility as an individual consumer:

  . we can choose to comment with our children
  . we can choose to watch or not

- Regulations in this area will not make much difference in controlling advertising or programs.

- Soap operas deal with issues we do not cover in schools - relationships, problem-solving, etc. albeit with their own view. Children want this kind of information.

- DeGrassi Junior High is a show children can relate to.

- We should use media (T.V. programming) to promote healthy lifestyles, as Quebec does.

- Mormon Church clips on family life are good and something similar could be developed by policy makers.

- We need quality programming on television.

- We need a cross Canada resource to pull together all available programs, a national group to keep track of all good programming.

- There is a national group of educational T.V. organizations eg. Access Alberta, TV Ontario, get them to lead this activity.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- The buying power of the minimum wage has decreased by 30 - 40%, the buying power of professionals has decreased by 4% since 1981.

- We propose to raise the minimum wage or provide a Guaranteed Annual Income.

- Current mortgages require two incomes.

- Farmers' income is down because we do not subsidize them (not suggesting we should) - minimum wage does not impact on this group.

- Massive farm foreclosures announced this week and we are concerned about the economics, but what about the families?

- Many no-cost family activities now have costs attached, for example, hockey, swimming pool.

- We must be mindful that policies do not inhibit people, but free them.

- Family policies must preserve dignity, (eg. a self-sufficient family were told they were eligible for support because their income was below poverty line).

- Farms are not self-sufficient any more - wives do not have time for vegetable garden, cows, chickens, etc.

- We need to address the dilemma between individual or universal programs.

- We need to consider the distribution of income within the family and the differential impact of policies to different family members, (eg. Family Allowance paid to women, tax breaks going to principle the wage earner).

- We need to raise Social Assistance levels or provide a Guaranteed Annual Income.

- We recommend to take it further and have a Guaranteed Annual Income.

- We always worry people will get something they do not deserve and we need to dispel this myth.

- We do not talk about abuse of business expenses in the tax system, but we worry about abuses of social programs. It is because one is hidden and the other is a direct expenditure.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We must make parenting programs available to all communities.

- Teaching parenting to children also helps them better understand themselves in their current parent-child relationship.

- This idea of teaching parenting is often rejected by education systems because children will not be parents until later.

- We need to make programs "acceptable" and accessible, but proper labelling that does not deter people, for example, "This kid is driving me Crazy", rather than "Mental Health Issues with Children".

GROUP 31 **Facilitator: Terry Russell**
Recorder: Rob McLeod

SYMPOSIUM OVERVIEW

- People gave presentations during the question periods. They should limit to asking questions only.
- Issues should be rediscussed every couple of years to keep people examining them and not allowing them to revert back to their own discipline.
- Speakers were of good quality.
- The community should own the solution. The solution should not come from above.
- All delegates should be sent a list of others coming so they can network ahead of time.
- The topics were too broad. They should focus on key issues, e.g.
  - focus on the needs of seniors
  - expand the diversity of the term 'family'.

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- With the diversity of Canadian families, policies now affect each family differently.
- Families are losing the responsibility for the elderly.
- There is a growing amount of elderly abuse.
- Women have too much responsibility:
  - policy has to change to reflect womens' wants and needs
  - de-institutionalization is causing women to stay home and care for the sick.
- There is a declining birth rate and a decline in adolescence child bearing.
- There is a lack of knowledge on how to build families. This is caused by lack of role models which is caused by families breaking up.
- Men do not know how to be meaningful role models.

- Public education has to fit:
  - ethnic backgrounds
  - lesser educated peoples
  - immigrants

- All information should not be geared toward white, educated males.

2. FAMILIES IN THE COMMUNITY

- Policies must support what the grass roots are doing, for example, Native initiatives.

- Education is going back to the 3 R's because of cutbacks.

- Community development workers need to take a large step in bringing communities together.

- Churches and schools are centres where the community needs to meet and develop. They need to open the doors to the whole community, not just the parents.

- There is a need to expand the views of the church and school so that people will feel safe going there.

3. SERVICING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Should not differentiate between the two types of family.

- All families can become vulnerable.

- We should provide service to all families. All families become vulnerable at some point.

- There is a need for a place where all people can share their vulnerability and feel wanted - a place where people can go and come forward with their problem.

- We should bring in programs like 'Block Parent' to cover all areas. Postal workers and police could have a method of checking all vulnerable people.

- We must provide service for children of abused families.

- Daycare should be used as a child development strategy, not as a womens' work issue. Focus should be on prevention.

- Treatment must start at the time of disclosure of abuse or violence and then continue.

- Greater cooperation between levels of Government is needed. Get people to help.

4. HEALTH AND FAMILIES

- Put money where it is needed, for example, preventive services for families.

- We spend too much money caring for the injured then fail to do anything to prevent the abuse from happening again.

- Nutrition - steps need to be taken to get families healthier.

- We must alert Governments to Housing and Poverty issues.

- Public Health Nurses should be given more money so they can get out into the community and be known in the community.

- More money should be spent on education about sexually transmitted diseases.

- Substance abuse - advertisements need to be directed to the down-side.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Parents need to become more directly involved.

- Not always the right families take advantage of school programs.

- Schools and parents need to work more as a partnership.

- New residents should be oriented to the community through the schools (day cares, childcare workers, etc.)

- Memos from school should be done in ethnic languages. There should not be the assumption that all memos are to educated whites.

- Family Life Education should become broader to cover more issues.

- Networking is needed among day cares, schools, and social workers.

- Something should be done to bring Family Life Education to all students, not just those looking for it.

- Schools should assist parents in educating in specific areas. (ie. contraceptives)

6. **WORK AND FAMILY**

- Employee Assistance Programs should be in all work places.
- We should not promote benefits but promote job sharing. This is a perfect way for families to work and meet family needs.
- Company policies have to become more flexible and relate to family policy.
- Flexible hours - major way to reduce family stress.

7. **COMMUNICATION**

- Government advertisements should be set to tune people back to what is important in life.
- Corporate policy is centered around making money. Companies do not worry about the image they are promoting (sex, drugs, violence).
- Parents should use TV to communicate and use it as a tool to start communication in their families.

8. **LAW AND FAMILIES**

- We must educate Judges, Police, and the RCMP.
- We should find alternatives to jail which would keep people in the work force and relieve family stress.
- We must educate people so they can understand the law, and not just educate people working in the legal system.
- The law must provide safety to abused people.
- The law must be accountable for all its actions.
- Support towards abused victim is required.
- Courts should be allowed to use hearsay evidence. This will help young abused children.
- We must give abusers and the abused the message that something will happen if they abuse or are abused.

9. **FAMILY INCOME**

- We need to restore self-worth and dignity to people who are currently on welfare.

- Taxing below a certain income level should be looked at. This takes dignity away from people who are earning low wages.

- Government has to look at the message it is sending to the working poor.

- Guaranteed Family Income should be introduced.

- We must review backward policies and their effect on people.

- Take unemployment benefits and use them to supplement wages. This would give people a feeling of self-worth and a feeling that they are providing for their family.

- There should be equitable wages for women.

- Policy needs to change so that single-income families can manage financially.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- There should be options in daycare as to the choice of facility.

- We need to expand day care spaces and improve training for the workers in the facilities.

- We must bring back the idea that children are an asset. We should look at the direct and indirect message that is being sent out about families and children.

- Family expectations on families have changed to increase the childrens' goals towards monetary needs.

- We should let children grow at their own rate and not program them to grow too fast - this causes them to have adult stresses.

- We should give parents information on family activities which can be done at very little expense.

- Marriage Preparation classes should be available.

- We should consider Parent Preparation classes - before people have troubled children.

GROUP 32 **Facilitator: Ron Neumann**
Recorder: Linda Wrigley

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- What will our lifestyles be like in ten to fifteen years time?

- Not enough discussion on multi-culturalism at the Symposium.

- Not enough discussion of next generation of elderly (us), who will be educated, active and working at seventy and older.

- Nothing on dealing with handicapped family members, this is an important issue.

- The greatest impact on families will come from the predicted economic swings of the next 10-12 years.

- Government should facilitate better inter-cultural awareness as a prelude to making policy. This knowledge should dictate policy - Government must talk to all concerned groups.

- The struggles of "ordinary" families are chiefly economic ones.

- We need Canadian statistics and solutions - not American ones.

- We should place an emphasis on the "biological connection" between family members, as a means of supporting families.

- Through education, we can build a "caring, sharing community". This may sound simplistic, but small groups and individual counselling are the starting points for strengthening families.

- More resources are needed for this, especially in rural areas. We need to start with children as young as possible.

- There are long waiting lists for family and individual counselling. Government should fund private counselling, long-term if necessary.

- More money should be spent on preventive services, particularly for the youngest children.

- Federal and provincial governments must resolve their jurisdictional differences. "Stone-walling" and political differences as are not helping to develop native-run services. Native run services are essential.

- Government "red tape" is a problem as it inhibited inter-agency communication and people can be shuffled off. We need clear definitions and a single focus for case management.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- More student counsellors are needed. We should involve them and teachers in early intervention programs and outreach services to troubled families.

- We must start prevention and intervention at the elementary school level. Children can get lost in big schools if we do not take care.

- We need to ensure multi-agency communication at the local level, and stop the buck-passing. Family Court is a good mechanism for achieving this.

- Government should encourage agency networking through both policy direction and funding.

- Policies should recognize that troubled families are often in transition, (e.g. on U.I., on welfare, having trouble with their children, fleeing family violence). These situations are not permanent, and we should not label people for all time.

- We need Family Service/Resource Centres to provide coordinated services.

- There is a need for one case manager to steer families and individuals through the many and various agencies.

- We must recognize that for many of us, the workplace is the community. There is a need for Employee Assistance Programs.

- Healthy families should be encouraged to help those in trouble by acting as a support and advocate. (Big Brother model).

- Economics is the biggest problem for all families. For a decent standard of living, both parents have to work and paying off a mortgage is stressful. Not enough discussion on the housing question - housing one's family is the major stress.

- We must recognize that all families have crises - how they cope is the key. (Also the key in determining what supports families need.)

- Note that some changes in family structures are exciting - not all are unhealthy.

- We must support aboriginal self-government and we must tolerate mistakes as part of the process of development, we learn to sit back.

- The media must develop positive images of native people.

- We need to start working for native self-government now, or will be a rough time for all of us.

- We should not label the poor, native or non-native, as "scum".

- We should look at the Japanese model of work as community for ideas for our own society.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

WE NEED A 10 YEAR NATIONAL FAMILY VIOLENCE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN, PARTICULARLY AIMED AT THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN.

- We have the information about the long and short-term effects of family violence and we should act **NOW** to educate the educators and to start very early with children.

- VIOLENCE is not a single issue for women, children or elders.

- We must look at violence in the context of:

  . the healthy family
  . dating violence by both males and females
  . violent teens versus their parents
  . psychological violence

- Violence originates with low self-esteem. We must start to build esteem in the very young.

- Is violence more acceptable today?

- Is violence a power or a conflict issue? We believe it is a power issue which is rooted in our societal systems and its attitudes towards women, children and elders.

- Conflict resolution and communication skills can help to some extent, and should be taught to all.

- Believe that we have a greater awareness of family violence, rather than that there has been a great increase, but it should be noted that the economy is great stressor.

- We have come a long way.

- Battering men suggest in British Columbia have suggested a shelter for men.

- How does or should the community deal with perpetrators?
  - where can a sexual abuser get help safely?

NO SEXUAL OFFENCE IS TRIVIAL.

4. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Latch key kids are a problem, solutions:
  - need community and school involvement
  - need the facts - there is some evidence such children have higher functioning skills
  - children's safety must be assured
  - in a latch-key family, unfair pressure can be put on the eldest child.

- In Canada, there is no prior right of parental right of choice of education despite the Canadian government's signing of the U.N. Declaration. This right should be in force.

- We need to have social workers in high schools.

- We need child care education and peer counselling training in schools. These classes should be for credit. Schools could use students as aids.

5. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- The growth of part-time and casual work (mainly by women) has meant no commitment to employees, no benefits, etc.

- Government should protect families from industry, be on side of families and police industry.

- Part-time work is alright, and it is useful for some people at times, but it should be regulated in the same way as full-time work, with set schedules, benefits, seniority, etc.

- Unions often do not help part-time and casual workers, as concentrate on protecting their full-time members.

- In government job creation programmes, the terms are too short and people are not properly trained for real work.

- It is fact that there are few real jobs out there.

- Training should be for specific, available jobs and should last as long as is required to gain skills.

6. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Delegates would have liked to see a broader approach taken by the Panel, i.e. not just family law but laws that affect families.

- We need legal protection for handicapped and elderly people.

7. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- There should be no CBC cutbacks in the area of (good) family programming.

- We need to become "bullshit detectors" when viewing television.

- Delegates were concerned about violence and reckless driving on television.

- Parents must teach choice and priorities to children, especially in viewing.

- Cartoons teach young children that violence is funny, not a serious matter.

- Beer advertising and the glorification of the "good life" brewers should bear the costs of their product, as even the high federal and provincial taxes do not cover cost of the damage (hospital, police, courts, family violence, etc.)

8. FAMILY INCOME

- We need a Guaranteed Minimum Income.

- Families should NOT be poor.

- Canada tries to have "Scandinavian social programs on U.S. tax rates", we must decide our priorities.

- We need to look at whether assistance programmes should be targeted or universal, and how we are priorizing existing tax dollars.

- Politicians should apply fiscal test to their own programs and spending.

- There should be a fiscal mechanism - family allowances, tax break, whatever - to allow mothers to stay home with their children.

- There is a great burden placed on women at all stages of the family life-cycle.
  - men must assume a full range of family responsibilities
  - truly equal partnership is a long way off, but things are gradually changing.

- We need equal pay for work of equal value - also benefits, seniority, etc., for casual and part-time work.

- There is a need to elevate the dignity of those receiving Family Allowance, U.I., SAP, etc. The stigma gets perpetuated, and it is hard for children to shake off.

- We need re-education to deal with this, (families in transition again).

- People should have enough money to make choices about their life-styles.

9. PARENTING TODAY

- Each province should have a fertility clinic, self-referral should be possible.

- There should be a national standard for adoption criteria.

- Canada should allow third world children in for adoption - adoption agencies should work with multi-cultural agencies and the countries of origin.
  [There was strong dissent on this - others would prefer to support children within their own cultures or countries]

- The courts should decide who has a valid interest in a child in custody, adoption and protection cases.

GROUP 33 **Facilitator: Peter Nicholson**
Recorder: Brian Williams

1. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Service providers, NGO's, etc., need more funding for impact to help families in stress.

- More research is required to provide data to support funding requests from agencies and additional program development to assist families in need.

- Training initiatives, similar to those in foster care are required in the family violence field.

- Funding for such training is required.

- Work between agencies is important in order to provide a co-ordinated service.

- Anecdotal research of families in crisis is required to demonstrate the need for more funding and program development.

- More funding is required for intervention services.

- More funding is required for immediate needs and for preventive services for families in crisis.

- It is important to deal with family problems now.

- Agencies need new money for immediate intervention and long-term training and prevention for families in crisis.

- Agency workers are burning out, they need more support, i.e., funding for staff, training and program development.

- We need strategies for connecting service delivery people to existing training, as no more funding will be available.

- Service delivery agencies and NGO's are concerned about service delivery workers doing fund-raising to meet shortfalls and cutbacks in agency funding.

- Agencies need to learn and develop lobbying skills to approach governments for funding.

2. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- Coverage from medical and group insurance companies needs to be expanded to cover the range of problems encountered by rural and urban families.
- Time available for family life is decreasing.
- Demands of family life affect employees at the workplace; concerns about children are carried to the office.
- Men are becoming more aware of family issues.
- Men need to contribute more to family functioning on a day- to-day basis.
- More school-based activities are needed which are linked to the workplace to support families by keeping children occupied.
- There needs to be a partnership between schools and families to deal with family issues.

3. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- There is a changing ethnic mix of school children with more youth in the system coming from different ethnic backgrounds.
- Parents expect the school to pick up the slack on family raising; are we failing in the family?
- The school year should be extended to deal with parenting and family life issues.
- Unless we deal with the economic and social inequalities between men and women, we cannot expect to change and improve the family.
- Society must look to men and women and not education system to deal with equality.
- There is a resistance for men to change and become equal partners in the family.
- Children are still being raised in sex roles; how do we change this?
- Poverty affects all themes discussed at symposium.
- Government should provide funds to deal with poverty.

- Government has a responsibility to make funds available for programs that alleviate poverty and provide services for families in crisis.

- Society need to reduce waste at all levels as a way of finding additional funds to reduce poverty and increase funding for Family Support Services.

- There is a need to reorganize our priorities as a society and place more priority on support to families.

- There is a lack of resources from government going into native family structures (housing, employment, training).

- There is a lack of resources from government going to all low income families.

- There is a tendency of governments to deal only with visible minorities and exclude others, such as the poor.

- Society needs to recognize and learn from other cultures.

- We need to acknowledge a multi-cultural society rather than 'melting pot'.

- We need to understand the cultural values of people we work with.

- We need to learn how to communicate from other cultures and to adopt the more positive aspects of other cultures.

- We need to understand what values we transmit to our children about other cultures.

- Governments should create guidelines to screen new legislation which affects families.

- Governments should do impact studies on new legislation to determine its affect on families.

- Legislation should have to meet minimum guidelines established to improve family life and meet the needs of families in crisis.

- Some government policies/programs works at cross-purposes, i.e. deductions from social assistance of family allowance payments, etc.

- Government agencies and service providers need to educate population on the need for more resources to social assistance programs - dignity should be restored.

- There is a disparity in percentage increases in wages between people on low and high incomes.

- Society need to deal with conflicting cultural values in Canada.

- Governments need to deliver more money to welfare recipients and provide the client with more discretion to spend assistance.

- Provincial organizations should lobby other provinces where assistance rates are reduced.

- Governments need a basic realignment of priorities and to see family as an investment.

- There is a concern among service delivery organizations (NGO's) that funding will be lost if they criticize government policies; organizations have become more silent.

- Service delivery organizations (NGO's) need more financial resources to support the family.

- Governments need to have a full employment agenda including training and include more incentives for people on social assistance.

4. HEALTH OF FAMILIES

- Improvement is needed in attitudes and activities of youth regarding physical fitness, at present, fitness among youth is decreasing.

- Sharing tiredness between working parents must change through education and activity programs about parenting directed at youth.

- Education is needed to improve nutrition and physical activity level.

- We need better qualified teachers to deal with key aspects of physical activity.

- Adult goals of fitness 'ideal' are not the same for youth; youth should work-out everyday and have fun with it

- The hurried child syndrome mitigates against appropriate physical activity of youth; there never seems to be enough time.

- Parents fear their children being assaulted walking to activity or educational programs sometimes prevents children from developing their own sense of fear. Sometimes parents are overprotective.

- We need to get back to basics which must include physical well-being.

- Children are being socialized in a competitive manner making it difficult for them to learn how to play.

- Children need more cooperative games which are simple and fun.

- Agencies working together to support the family is important.

- Governments, NGO's and service providers need to develop ongoing initiatives to deal with the family following the Symposium.

- Policies which are developed which affect the family must be as inclusive as possible.

- Each Premier should host a provincial meeting to discuss with provincial delegates their views on the Symposium.

- It is important to develop blueprints and guidelines federally along the family policy model developed by Quebec.

- There is not enough support available for families with handicapped children.

- Policies for special families (families with handicapped children) need to be individualized to respond to children kept in the home.

- Post-birth resources are important yet generally lacking. Society needs to recognize that breast feeding has implications for good health yet there is no support at home or in the workplace for mothers to breast feed their children.

- Society needs to deal with pornography and violence - videos, TV etc.; as they have an impact on children.

GROUP 35 **Facilitator: Peter Vanrheenen**
Recorder: Sonya Kiloh

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Families today are changing and we need to adapt to those changes.
- The term "Family Unit" best describes the make-up of today's families.
- Each of us has our own definition of "family".
- Instability can be caused by lack of acceptance of the changing family unit.
- The mobility of today's families leads to loss of traditional support structures.
- The changing cultural mix means there is:
    - a need for integration
    - a need for mechanisms for meeting the needs of immigrant women
    - that the community and provinces need to look at means of providing stability and continuity.
- Integration is a two-way process
- We must promote understanding and acceptance of other cultures (community, government, media, educators).
- We need education to promote cross-cultural understanding.
- Could government designate a new holiday - "Cross-Cultural Family Day"?
- National support is required.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- We must encourage community acceptance of various "family units".
- Municipal by-laws should promote family units, i.e. the removal of barriers (type of accommodation, number of people, special needs - ramps).
- There should be consistency among municipalities.

- Community organizations need to be flexible to meet the needs of the family.

- There should be consistency among communities in the services provided.

- There should be consistency between provinces regarding their services and programs, i.e. eligibility, age criteria, benefit levels).

- We must encourage voluntary community support.

- Community centres should be used to strengthen voluntary support.

- We need authority at the local level to coordinate services between provinces, municipal and voluntary groups. The following need to be stressed:

  . joint funding
  . no one group "owns" the problem
  . client centered services
  . ministries of family services should coordinate services, not control.

- We need communication from communities and families to assist in policy development. Mechanisms could include advisory councils which should be non-partisan. Allocated funds should be monitored and services should be given priority over expenses.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- We need a national organization or child welfare council to coordinate between the provinces and the federal government and to provide recommendations to develop policy.

- There should be integration of various services to vulnerable children, i.e. health, mental health, police.

- Preventive programs are needed but there should be a balance between prevention and intervention.

- We need a national strategy (5-10 years) to strengthen the family.

- We also need a strategy to protect children which would focus on family violence, sexual abuse, and the court system.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

A consistent curriculum between the provinces is required.

- This should emphasize:
  - healthy lifestyles
  - the changing needs of the family
  - access to support services
  - healthy communities
  - family relationships
  - prevention and education
  - community input into specific topics in health needs and education
  - the legitimizing of the community's role in addressing health concerns
  - environmental factors (pollution) which federal and provincial governments need to ensure are dealt with.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- Schools need to have a community focus, for example:
  - Parent-Teacher Associations
  - use as community centres
  - parent/child educational programs
- Family life classes should be taught in high schools.
- There should be family support workers in schools, i.e. for mental health concerns.
- Teachers cannot provide the required services without training and support.
- We need to provide social workers, child development and recreational workers in schools.
- We should make better use of the media as an educational tool.
- Outreach programs are required.
- We must change the negative image of schools for families who may be reluctant to access schools for other services.

6. WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

- Employers need to recognize family needs, for example when demanding overtime.

- Employee support programs need to recognize work related stress is impacting on family life and work life.

- There should be greater support for families by an employment policy which addresses these issues, i.e. child care, health, leave management, minimum wage policy, hours of work.

- There should be awards for employers for being good corporate citiens who are sensitive to family life.

- We must recognise the impact of unemployment on family life.

- We need a better understanding of the causes and results of unemployment.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- Laws are not always fair and just.

- We need better education of judges regarding child welfare, custody and family violence.

- Family law often refers to adult family members and does not include children.

- We need to provide representation for children in family break-up and custody cases.

- Mandatory treatment for abusers is required.

- Protection and support for victims of abuse and violence is required.

- We must ensure society's recognition of male/female relationships and the changing attitudes.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- We need education on "how to watch" television and properly interpret the reality.

- There should be more Canadian content on television.

- Social organizations and communities need to use the media more effectively. We should demand family issues and community issues receive more time or exposure.

- Corporations should be conscious of what they sponsor.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- There must be recognition of the link between family and social issues and the lack of income.

- There is a need for the development of public policy in the area of income assistance, i.e. unemployment insurance, pensions, minimum wage, low income housing, disability pensions.

- Policy and programs are needed to raise those who are below poverty line above it.

- Corporations need to assume more responsibility to assist with job training.

- There is an expectation by employers and corporations of mobility on job which does not support family life (transfers).

- We need mobility assistance to get families to where the jobs are.

- Corporations need to review their policy of mobility and transfers and its effect on families.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We must recognise the importance of family education.

- Employers need to recognize both parents have equal responsibility in parenting.

- Education is best delivered through community structures and volunteer organizations.

- We should use the media to promote appropriate family models.

- The emphasis should be on quality family time, not on "buying" affection.

- We must recognise stress, etc., and decrease the guilt of parents.

- We need the financial support of government to support the family structure.

GROUP 36 **Facilitator: Bill Duncan**
Recorder: Don Fairbairn

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- It is important to recognize the family as a changing entity through time.

- A review of programs is needed to assess their impact on families.

- One needs to have a vision of/for families in order to adequately address family policy. (Where do we want to go with family policy?)

- Diversity within communities needs to be recognized across the country and "policy" tailored to local needs. (Community has to be empowered to find its own solutions.)

- Almost every aspect of economic/social life impacts on the family - Is family policy too big an area to tackle in its entirety? (Some in the group believe it is.)

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- A housing policy can segregate people (e.g. seniors). We need to be concerned, as a society, that this does not occur. (However sometimes it is a person's choice to be "segregated".)

- Community empowerment can help to avoid segregation as well as other unanticipated consequences of well-meaning planners.

- Through community supports the extended family can be helped to support one another. (Things like respite care are in short supply.) There are both financial and personal gains from the proper development of community supports.

- Community options for persons with disabilities need to ensure a quality life. (Some concern was expressed about the adequacy of private special care arrangements.)

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- Deinstitutionalization has, in some cases, resulted in exploitation and involvement of former institution residents in anti-social lifestyles (such as crime resulting in jail terms).

- Cultural differences and needs must be recognized in serving vulnerable children.

- More of our social program dollars need to be spent on preventive services.

- The way we formulate policy has to change (need to involve those directly affected not just politicians and senior bureaucrats).

- In spousal assault, the abuser should be removed so that family life is minimally disrupted. (Some disagreement was expressed since incarceration is not the solution to the problem. Long-term therapy is needed and this leaves the offender in the community and a risk to families.)

- Child abuse - removal of the child from the home creates additional trauma. What is needed is in-home support wherever possible.

- Speedy investigation and charges (if appropriate) is critical in cases of family violence. That is the only way the offender can be removed from the family.

- Communities need to be strengthened to support families. Issues for communities are:

  . differences in attitude and values within the community
  . sexism

- Solutions need to be tailored to different community needs (large - small communities) - Parts can be taken from proposals made by policy makers and adapted to the particular needs of the community.

- Cycles of abuse etc. that exist within a family often need to be broken.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- Education/prevention is the key in improving health status of families (e.g. to prevent accidents as well as prevent illness).

- Politicians need to set a better example and lead by promoting good ideas rather than attacking each other.

- Education is needed re better budgeting and other preventive measures.

- Schools should not be feeding kids but volunteer food programs for children are needed (more of them).

- Jurisdictional disputes between agencies and departments can destroy the ability of programs to deliver what is needed to families.
- People need to have both the education and the dollars to pursue a healthy lifestyle.

- Health programs and the treatment of illness are equated among large portions of population. We need to get away from that approach to health care.

- Communities need to define the use of health dollars. (Professionals tend to support hi-tech expenditures related to their specialities - this is not always the best use of health care dollars.)

- Health professionals should be paid to keep people well. (Should payments be stopped when people become ill?)

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- When there is a cost for education or prevention programs, then only the middle class can afford them. There needs to be better funding for agencies providing programs.

- Need to evolve policies, programs and interventions with clients/client groups to ensure they are responsive to client needs and ensure that they match how clients perceive their situation. (i.e. should not be a top-down response to problems with families)

- We need to be careful about labelling clients - labels stick long after they have lost any usefulness.

- There is a tendency to make policies for the exception rather than majority. This is wrong.

- Out of conferences like this, we don't need **answers** so much as a **process** for addressing the needs of families.

6. WORK AND FAMILIES

- At the symposium, work accommodations for families were focused on the needs of working mothers. A recognition of father's responsibilities and interest was not taken seriously. This is a narrow view of work and family life.

- Career success is based on the hours a parent spends working. This creates an inherent conflict with family life.

- The needed attitude change among employers has not yet occurred (changes are happening but for business reasons and largely "just a gesture"). More dollars could be spent by employers and government if there was a true commitment to working parents.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- The adversarial system is not suited to family law. (We need to find solutions to family problems not prove who is right/wrong.)

- In family matters the court is a last resort. (Saskatchewan's new legislation is mentioned as recognizing this.)

- Quick legislative fixes and poor court decisions can have negative effects for the future of families.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- The act of TV viewing fragments the family and has other negative effects. In many ways this TV viewing behaviour is more of a problem for families than what is seen on TV.

- The scheduling of TV programs has reduced human contact to short blocks of time which starts to define a lifestyle.

- Media content is also a concern. The media defines what is news through selection and presentation.

- The media is also good for families in some respects as it generates discussion.

- Families need to take responsibility for themselves. They can use what is good and turn off what is bad. (Even if we cannot change what is on TV, we can control what people watch and when.)

- We need to promote personal responsibility. We also need to enable individuals to exercise personel responsibility through good policy and that is done collectively.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- Adequate family income is at the core of all we have been talking about.

- Things like food vouchers - Are food vouchers and similar approaches a solution to child hunger? (They may be a short-term solution but they don't get at the root problem; services like parent aides are a more effective long-term solution.)

- Many working families are living below social assistance levels.

- There is a danger that problems in some low income families (e.g. alcoholism) are used to paint all poor families as incapable of managing their own affairs.

- Too much government involvement with the family can destroy the family's ability to cope on its own.

- Perhaps there is a need to look at negative Income Tax again. But there is a problem with personal income taxes increasing further.

- Alternatives to using social assistance as the only means to supplement family income for the working poor must be found. (It does little to promote independence.)

- Tax legislation has a negative effect on low income families in some cases. (e.g. employment expenses such as the cost of nannies can only be claimed by those who can afford that kind of childcare.)

- Good policy to support families requires, above all else, the political will to make it happen.

- We need to ensure a mechanism for the equitable rationing of resources is available. The availability of help should not be based on the squeaky wheel syndrome.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We need to be cautious about looking for quick fixes. We should be more concerned about long-term processes to strengthen and maintain families. (The answers are not just the large "P" political responses that will end up on political campaigns.)

- Change will require better communication between officials and professionals. Often they each have part of the answer but need to work more effectively together.

GROUP 37 **Facilitator: Danni Boyd**
Recorder: Joyce Reid

1. CANADA'S FAMILIES TODAY

- Policies need to address the diverse family forms rather than only the traditional.

- The younger wage earners may not be able to support those who will be on pensions. Thus we need to shift the sources/ways of financially supporting the elderly.

- A description or definition of what constitutes a family is needed.

- The attitude of the "me" generation has been focused on the self.

- There has been a shift in farm families from a family focus to a business focus.

- We may need major incentives to bring young people back to farming.

- Recognition and support of the diverse types family farms from traditional to all others is needed. People need to have the opportunity to make choices and support for their choices.

- Canadian families are stuck in a class system.

2. THE FAMILY IN THE COMMUNITY

- It is difficult for adolescents to define their roles, as adults in our society have difficulty defining their own roles in this age of change.

- We need to provide support to families who are caring for the elderly at home. A Partnership is needed between governments and families to provide this support.

- Families and governments need to work together - one should not be working for the other.

- Services need to be provided to families well before there is a crisis:

  . to change attitudes;
  . to give people information;
  . to know how to intervene appropriately when a crisis does occur.

- As a society, we have lost a sense of community, especially in urban areas.
- Where do the values come that affect our attitudes come from? Our values can provide a framework for our communities.
- What are the roles of the institutions which generate these values?
- Television is filling the gap - T.V. could be used to support society by affirming family values.

3. SERVING VULNERABLE FAMILIES

- All families are vulnerable.
- Money should be appropriated according to our priorities.
- Emotional and social health should not be separated from physical health when it comes to funding.
- People need to be "o.k." with themselves before they can help others, including "professional helpers". Individuals must take care of themselves to be able to take care of others.
- Governments are committed to fund services to vulnerable families.
- Grass roots level organizations identified as being knowledgeable about vulnerable families. They should continue to be funded by governments.
- An holistic approach rather than a fragmented, territorial or politically appealing approach to services is needed.
- Government must network with various agencies to provide services.
- We need to educate people in parenting skills in order to prevent child abuse and neglect. Who and how such programming is presented is as important as the contents if we are to avoid stigmatizing any group or groups.
- We must be careful in labelling services to ensure we do not just give new names to old services, but do develop innovative services with appropriate names.

4. THE HEALTH OF OUR FAMILIES

- We must address sexuality in a healthy way.
- Preventive systems and services which support health within families are not well-funded compared with services to cure sick people.
- Stress causes ill health.
- We need to look at the health of family units.
- We need to understand the effect of a disease on all family members, not just the suffering individuals.
- We need to teach people how to parent their children.
- People's basic needs have to be met before they can be effective parents. (e.g, food, shelter)
- We must educate people in budgeting, nutrition, food preparation, etc.

5. EDUCATION AND FAMILIES

- We must learn more about the family as a unit.
- We must go back to the basics, for example, communicating with each other.
- There are too many demands being placed on our education system and consequently on the teachers in our schools.
- Teachers should help the child feel wanted in their classes.
- We need to show nurturing to others, such as teachers.
- We need to teach people how to cope with what is ahead of us in the future.

6. WORK AND THE FAMILY

- Employee assistance programs are expensive and organisations may not be able to keep them up.
- Employees and employers need to be seen as part of the same family.
- Parenting programs should be made available at the work place.

- Employers should focus on providing preventive programs rather than services after a crisis has happened.

- Employers should remember that the benefits of assistance programs are long-term so economic results are not immediately obvious.

- Employees are more mobile than they used to be.
- Employee assistance program benefits should be available like other health services; e.g., Worker's Compensation.

- Most businesses are small and so would need government assistance to provide day care, etc. (or they could contribute to a mutual fund).

- Hiring practices especially in regard to women reflect employers' refusal to deal with family problems.

7. LAW AND FAMILIES

- It is difficult to define "parent", "child", and "family" in legal terms.

- The Charter of Rights will influence family law.

- There are gaps in the law, especially those relating to children; eg., age limit differences between Federal and Provincial legislation.

8. COMMUNICATION WITH AND WITHIN FAMILIES

- People need to learn how to communicate effectively.

- There is great potential to use television as a positive influence on families.

- The values expressed on television are often different from those we express in our families.

- Meal time is an important time for families to communicate.

- Parents need to spend time with their children to discuss information presented through the media.

- The public needs to talk to the media to demand it is given what it wants to read, see and hear.

9. FAMILY INCOME

- A Guaranteed Annual Income would be a step forward.

- Money needs to be put towards saving the environment in order to save the family.
- No one has the sense that there is no more money, whatever governments may say.
- Concerns about family income are the basis of the majority of political issues and societal issues.

10. PARENTING TODAY

- We must build on the desire of people who want parenting courses by providing those courses.
- Foster parent training in Saskatchewan is leading the way for parent education.
- Government could make it a condition that in order to receive your Family Allowance, you must attend parenting classes.
- Parenting classes must be accessible to all people regardless of income, etc.
- All forms of media can be used to teach parenting skills.
- We should extend pre-natal programs to people who are already parents and provide follow through for longer periods of time.
- Governments and communities should create parent support groups for all parents.
- We must develop various appropriate strategies to intervene with families, not just one system or approach.